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THE *BEAUX* OF THE REGENCY

By LEWIS MELVILLE

VOL. I

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TO

MY WIFE

PREFACE

THE niche that the *Beaux* of the Regency still occupy in the minds of most people, though not, perhaps, in their esteem, shows clearly that folly, as well as wisdom or art or beauty, may bring in its train a considerable and enduring fame. Yet while to-day the names of Brummell, Petersham, Alvanley, and the rest, are household words in the vocabulary of those who have but dipped lightly into the social annals of the Georgian era, it is astonishing how little is known of any of these men, with, possibly, the sole exception of Brummell. It is not less surprising, perhaps, that their lives and achievements have found no historian, for it cannot be doubted they make an interesting, if not always an edifying, group.

There is, of course, the monumental life of Brummell by Captain Jesse, but therein the record of that worthy is embedded in a vast mass of extraneous matter. The Beau was better treated

by Mons. Barbey D'Aurevilly, the author of "Le Chevalier Des Touches," in his admirable little volume, "Du Dandysme et de Georges Brummell," which, appearing in 1845, has since run through several editions; while more recently (1906) his story has been somewhat baldly narrated by Mons. Roger Boutet de Monvel in "George Brummell et George IV.," and by M. Jacques Boulenger in the first chapter of his book, "Sous Louis-Philippe: Les Dandys." Of the other dandies of the Regency individually no one has written, though Mr. Whibley has something to say of them collectively in his delightful introduction to "The Pageantry of Life" (1900). Those authors whom Mr. Max Beerbohm has cruelly but accurately described as "silly Grace Wharton and silly Philip Wharton" have included in their "Wits and *Beaux* of Society" (1860) chapters on Brummell, Hook, Sydney Smith, and Sheridan, but these memoirs are written entirely without sympathy; and far better are the accounts of "Monk" Lewis, Hook, Brummell, and Rogers, given by Mons. Forgues in his interesting work, "Originaux et Beaux Esprits de l'Angleterre contemporaine" (1860).

Fortunately an historian of the *Beaux* of the Regency is not confined to these works for his

materials, for there exists a wealth of information in innumerable—and too often unindexed—memoirs and kindred works. The reminiscences of Captain Gronow are a gold mine in this respect, and there are many references in the biographies, autobiographies, and letters of Henry Angelo, Thomas Moore, Grantley Berkeley, Major Chambre, Lady Granville, Sheridan, Lord William Pitt Lennox, George Hanger, Crabb Robinson, Joseph Jekyll, Samuel Rogers, Harriette Wilson, Thomas Raikes, Cyrus Redding, and Lady Hester Stanhope, to name but a few. The compilations of Charles Marsh[1] and John Timbs[2] are not without value, and interesting are such trifles as "Neckclothitania," "Fashion," "*Ton*," Luttrell's "Advice to Julia," etc.; while the present writer has found useful facts in the contemporary issues of the *Gentleman's Magazine* and the newspapers of the day, as well as in such *romans-à-clef* as Lister's "Granby," Lytton's "Pelham," and Westmacott's "Fitzalleyne of Berkeley." At the end of this book is given a full list of the works consulted by the author, who takes this opportunity to

[1] *The Clubs of London* (1832).

[2] *A Century of Anecdote* (1864), *Clubs and Club-Life in London* (1866), *Anecdote Lives of the Later Wits* (1874), *English Eccentrics and Eccentricities* (1875), etc.

state that he has, to some slight extent, availed himself of the information about the dandies introduced into one or two chapters of his biography of George IV.[1] He has also had the good fortune to find some letters written by Brummell that have never before been printed.

It may be objected that most of the works mentioned are accessible; but the author believes, rightly or wrongly, that the majority of the memoirs of the dandies' contemporaries, containing as they do so much that is stale and unprofitable, have been long since relegated to the limbo of forgotten things. For ordinary purposes these scores of, for the most part, dreary reminiscences have no value even for students, and, save here and there by some intrepid explorer, have been ignored, except perhaps by the diligent contributors to the *Dictionary of National Biography*. It is surprising how many compilers of diaries and reminiscences have failed to put on record their impressions of their friends' characters, appearance, and eccentricities, forgetting that what was familiar to them would be unknown to future generations; and even when people are introduced into the journals, the references are all too frequently valueless; as, for example,

[1] *The First Gentleman of Europe* (1906).

when Rogers in one of his letters states, "On Thursday Sharp and the Mackintoshes returned to Lowwood from Patterdale," or when Byron, writing to Rogers, remarks, "I saw your friend Sharp in Switzerland." The present writer may, perhaps, put forward the humble plea, that he has examined a vast amount of dull matter in the endeavour to furnish an interesting account of those curious folk who form the subject of this work; and if, now and then, he has given an incident that is familiar or a saying that is known, he trusts he may be excused on the ground that these are essential to the purpose of portraying the individuals described.

At the outset the author pleads guilty to having interpreted his title with some degree of elasticity. George, Prince of Wales, was sworn in as Regent on February 5, 1811, and he ascended the throne as George IV. on January 20, 1820; but for the purpose of this book, which is to trace the history of the dandy as well as to chronicle the careers of the dandies, it has been considered sufficient that the persons introduced shall have lived under the Regency. Thus, the earlier chapters treat of men whose active careers were over, or nearly over, but whose influence was a strong factor in the development of the manners and

customs of those who came after them and took their place in the realm of fashion; then follows some record of the life and times of the greatest English dandy, George Bryan Brummell, the acknowledged king of society in this country during the first sixteen years of the last century; and, finally, comes an account of those who, after his departure from England, offered themselves in his stead as leaders of fashion. So it comes about that within these covers is mention, to take the two extreme instances, of Charles Morris, the bard of the Beefsteak Society, who, born in 1745, died ninety-three years later, and Lord William Pitt Lennox, who lived until 1881.

The author has very carefully selected the illustrations to these volumes, and he hopes not only that they will show the evolution of costume, but that they may also be of value to those interested in caricature, by showing the development of that art in England from the savage onslaughts of Gillray to the milder pictorial satire of Richard Dighton and Daniel Maclise.

In conclusion, he desires to acknowledge the kindness of Mr. Roger Ingpen, who has made many valuable suggestions in connection with this work; and to record his indebtedness to

Mr. L. Godfrey-Turner, who has generously permitted the insertion of a most interesting letter, the original of which is in his possession, from Brummell to Lord Charles and Lord Robert Manners.

LEWIS MELVILLE.

HARPENDEN,
January 1908.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE vii

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS xvii

INTRODUCTORY xxi

PART I

THE OLD BRIGADE

CHAP.

I. "LE BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMME" 1
(George, Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV., 1762–1830).

II. GEORGE HANGER 19
(First Baron Coleraine, 1751(?)–1824).

III. "JEHU" 51
(Sir John Lade, 1759–1838).

IV. "CRIPPLEGATE" 65
(Henry, eighth Earl of Barrymore, 1793–1823).

V. "JOCKEY" [1] AND "THE BARD" [2] 77
([1] Charles, eleventh Duke of Norfolk, 1746–1815).
([2] Charles Morris, 1745–1838).

VI. "SKIFFY" 103
(Sir Lumley St. George Skeffington, 1771–1850).

PART II

BRUMMELL AND HIS TIMES

CHAP.		PAGE
VII.	THE YOUTH OF GEORGE (COMMONLY CALLED "BEAU") BRUMMELL, 1778–1798	123
VIII.	THE SUPREME DANDY	139
IX.	"ARBITER ELEGANTIARUM," 1798–1816	161
X.	THE *BEAU'S* DAY	197
XI.	BRUMMELL, THE CLUBS, AND ALMACK'S	219
XII.	A BATTLE ROYAL, 1815	251
XIII.	OATLANDS	265
XIV.	BRUMMELL'S WATERLOO, 1816	287

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. I

"A View of Norfolk" (Charles, Duke of Norfolk). *From a coloured etching by Richard Dighton*, 1796 . . . . . *Frontispiece*

1812, or, Regency à la Mode. *From an etching by W. Heath* . . . . . *Facing page* 3

Coat of Arms of the Prince of Wales . . *page* 3

Coat of Arms of the Prince of Wales. *From "The Heraldry of Nature"* . . . . „ 6

George Hanger, Lord Coleraine. *From an etching by Richard Dighton*, 1808 . . . *Facing page* 21

Coat of Arms of George Hanger, fourth Baron Coleraine . . . . . *page* 21

"The Court of Love, or, An Election in the Island of Borneo." *From an etching by George Cruikshank in "The Scourge," November* 2, 1812 . . . . . *Facing page* 36

Sir John Lade. *From an engraving after a picture by Bromley* . . . . . „ „ 53

Coat of Arms of Sir John Lade . . . *page* 53

Lady Lade. *From an engraving after a painting* . *Facing page* 62

Coat of Arms of Henry, Earl Barrymore . . *page* 67

"Les Trois Magots." *From an etching by Gillray, November* 1, 1791. . . . . *Facing page* 72

Coat of Arms of Charles, Duke of Norfolk . *page* 79

"Le Cochon et ses deux Petits." *From an etching by Gillray*, 1792 . . . . . *Facing page* 79

Coat of Arms of Charles, Duke of Norfolk. *From "The Heraldry of Nature"* . . *page* 85

Charles Morris. *From an engraving by W. Greatbach* . . . . . *Facing page* 94

"So Skiffy skipt-on with his wonted grace." *From an etching by Gillray, February* 1, 1800 . „ „ 105

Coat of Arms of Sir Lumley St. George Skeffington . . . . . *page* 105

Crest of Beau Brummell . . . . . „ 125

George Bryan Brummell. *From an engraving after a miniature by John Cooke* . . . . *Facing page* 141

"The Exquisite." *From an etching by George Cruikshank* . . . . . „ „ 174

"The Dandy Club." *From an etching by Richard Dighton*, 1818 . . . . . „ „ 221

"The Great Subscription Room at Brooks's; or, Opposition Members engaged upon Hazard-ous Points." *From an engraving after Robert Cruikshank* . . . . „ „ 226

A Ball at Almack's—1815 . . . . . „ „ 242

"A View from the Horse Guards" (H.R.H. the Duke of York). *From an etching by Richard Dighton*, 1817 . . . . . „ „ 267

H.R.H. the Duchess of York. *From an etching by Gillray* . . . . . „ „ 272

Matthew Gregory Lewis. *From a photo by Emery Walker, after the picture by H. W. Pickersgill, R.A., in the National Portrait Gallery* . . „ „ 280

INTRODUCTORY

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INTRODUCTORY

A *BEAU*, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is (i) a man who gives particular or excessive attention to dress, mien, or social etiquette; an exquisite, a fop, a dandy; or (ii) the attendant or suitor of a lady; a lover, a sweetheart.[1] In general conversation, however, the word is employed to describe a handsome, well-dressed man of the upper classes; even in books by recognised stylists occurs the phrase "a middle-class *beau*," which is used as a term of opprobrium, suggesting either a second-rate dandy or one who dresses above his station. But even as there were *beaux* who were not handsome; so there were some who did not give particular or excessive attention to dress. Indeed, in Georgian days the word *beau* seems to have been employed very nearly as a synonym for a leader of fashion,

[1] "*Beau.* With the article A before it, means a great favourite of all women."—Fielding: "A Modern Glossary," in *The Covent Garden Journal*, No. 4.

whether he attained that exalted rank by virtue of dress, appearance, manners, wit, or eccentricity. Perhaps the true meaning of the word is most closely approached by the definition: one who has, in the Meredithian sense, a Presence or a Port. "By a Port, one may understand them to indicate something unsympathetically impressive," the great novelist has written; "whereas a Presence would seem to be a thing that directs the most affable appeal to our poor human weaknesses. His Majesty King George IV., for instance, possessed a Port: Beau Brummell wielded a Presence. Many, it is true, take a Presence to mean no more than a shirt-front, and interpret a Port as the art of walking erect. But this is to look upon language too narrowly." [1]

The pedigree of the *beau* or dandy (which latter word came into general use about 1813) has been given, in humorous vein, by Pierce Egan: "The DANDY was got by *Vanity* out of *Affectation*—his dam, *Petit-Maître* or *Macaroni*—his grandam, *Fribble*—his great-grandam, *Bronze*—his great-great-grandam, *Coxcomb*—and his earliest ancestor FOP. His uncle *Impudence*—his three brothers *Trick*, *Humbug*, and *Fudge!* and allied to the extensive family of the *Shuffletons*.

[1] George Meredith: *Evan Harrington*, chap. ii.

Indeed, this *Bandbox* sort of creature took so much the lead in the walks of fashion, that the BUCK was totally missing; the BLOOD vanished; the TIPPY is not to be found; the GO out of date; the DASH not to be met with; and the BANG-UP without a leader, at fault, and in the background." [1]

Carlyle, too, had something to say of these folk, and he subjects them to an examination of "some scientific strictness," to see what a dandy specially is, with this result: "A Dandy is a Clothes-wearing Man, a Man whose trade, office, and existence consists in the wearing of Clothes. Every faculty of his soul, spirit, purse and person is heroically consecrated to this one object, the wearing of Clothes wisely and well: so that as others dress to live, he lives to dress. The all-importance of Clothes, which a German Professor, of unequalled learning and acumen, writes his enormous Volume to demonstrate, has sprung up in the intellect of the Dandy without effort, like an instinct of genius; he is inspired with Cloth, a Poet of Cloth. What Teufelsdröckh would call a 'Divine Idea of Cloth' is born with him; and this, like other such Ideas, will express itself outwardly, or wring his heart asunder with un-

[1] *Life in London.*

utterable throes."[1] Having arrived at this conclusion, the expounder of Teufelsdröckh is reluctant to dismiss his subject, and proceeds to hold the cult up to admiration with full-flavoured, characteristic irony. "Like a generous, creative enthusiast," he continues, "the Dandy makes his Idea an Action, shows himself in peculiar guise to mankind; walks forth, a witness and living martyr to the eternal worth of Clothes. We called him a Poet: is not his body the (stuffed) parchment-skin whereon he writes, with cunning Huddersfield dyes, a Sonnet to his mistress' eyebrow? Say, rather, an Epos, and *Clotha Virumque cano*, to the whole world, in Macaronic verses, which he that runs may read. Nay, if you grant, what seems to be admissible, that a Dandy has a Thinking-principle in him, and some notions of Time and Space, is there not in this Life-Devotedness to Cloth, in this so willing sacrifice of the Immortal to the Perishable, something (though in reverse order) of that blending and identification of Eternity with Time, which, as we have seen, constitutes the Prophetic character?"[2]

The Meredithian definition suits the present writer, for it enables him to include some

[1] Carlyle: *Sartor Resartus*—"The Dandiacal Body."
[2] *Ibid.*

persons, who could scarcely be introduced into these volumes were the strict classification accepted. For the nonce, then, a *beau* shall be any man distinguished or notorious in society. He may be a gambler like Barrymore, a sportsman like John Lade, even a glutton like "Jockey of Norfolk," or a ne'er-do-well like George Hanger—though, indeed, in a circle where most come under this last designation, it is perhaps invidious to select any one name; he may be an exquisite like Brummell, a merchant like "Tom" Raikes, an aristocrat like Petersham, a wit like Alvanley or Luttrell, Hook or Sydney Smith; a *petit-maître* like Skeffington, a vain fool like "Romeo" Coates; or a *roué* like his Royal Highness, George, Prince of Wales. The fact of the matter is that, since all these men were, in one sense of the word or another, *beaux*, it is almost impossible to find a comprehensive description. So long as a man had sufficient vanity, exercised in such a manner as to attract the attention of his social equals or superiors by the perfection or the quaintness of his dress or manner, he was accepted as a member of this company.

The *beau* might be clever, but it was not desirable he should at this time be as brilliant as Fox or Sheridan. Hook was the desirable high-

water mark of genius in these circles, which admitted Byron in spite of rather than because of his intellectual qualities, and preferred such talent as inspired Skeffington to produce "The Sleeping Beauty," and Luttrell to write his "Advice to Julia." Respect for literary qualities, indeed, was not usually to be found in the dandy of this period; and writing of the *beaux* as a body, perhaps Charles Morris may be acquitted of malice for his lines:

"The Dandy's head,
A Vacuum dead.
Ne'er tries for thoughts to seek!
But hopes you'll smell
His musty shell,
And grin while others speak!" [1]

This, however, only applies to the dandies collectively, for if taken altogether the dandies were below the average intelligence, their leaders were far above it. In early Georgian days the exquisites included such shining lights as Lord Chesterfield, Charles James Fox, George Selwyn, "Old Q.," Horace Walpole, and Moore's "Hoary Old Sinner," Lord Hertford; while at the end of the reign of "The First Gentleman of Europe"

[1] *Masquerade Boy.*

prominent among the dandies were Count D'Orsay, Lytton, Palmerston, Disraeli the younger, and William Harrison Ainsworth. Even among the cronies of the earlier years of the last George, only the seventh and eighth Earls of Barrymore and Sir John Lade were not remarkable for sense; Skeffington, with all his eccentricities, Hanger, in spite of his follies, and the Duke of Norfolk, in spite of his grossness, had talent; Petersham was not a fool; and Brummell most undoubtedly had brains. Those who came after may have been inferior dandies, but, generally speaking, they were to the full as clever. Certainly Ball Hughes and "Pea-Green" Haynes had no claim to be regarded as intelligent, but Alvanley was brilliant, and so, it goes without saying, were Moore, Luttrell, and Sydney Smith; while the mere fact that Byron found pleasure in the *beaux*' company removes from them for ever the reproach of stupidity. For the rest, Gronow composed four volumes of reminiscences that have become classic; Raikes interested himself in foreign affairs, and was for many years a valued correspondent of the Duke of Wellington, whom he kept informed, unofficially, of the state of feeling in France; and Lord William Pitt Lennox, though not the peer of either of the

former, wrote many volumes of readable and instructive memoirs.

To the credit of the *beaux* it may be mentioned that wealth alone was powerless to force the barrier that separated the dandy *clique* from the rest of the world: in the days of the Regency a Sir Barnes Newcome would have knocked at the doors of White's in vain, though Tom Creevey, with two hundred a year, moved in the best circles. This, indeed, was the hey-day of the aristocracy. "At the accession of George III., the patricians were yet at the height of their good fortune," Thackeray has reminded us. "Society recognised their superiority, which they themselves pretty calmly took for granted. They inherited not only titles and estates, and seats in the House of Peers, but seats in the House of Commons. There were a multitude of Government places, and not merely these, but bribes of actual five-hundred-pound notes, which members of the House took not much shame in receiving. Fox went into Parliament at twenty: Pitt when just of age: his father when not much older. It was the good time for patricians. Small blame to them if they took and enjoyed, and over-enjoyed, the prizes of politics, the pleasures of social life." [1]

[1] *The Four Georges.*

The aristocracy, indeed, was then practically an autocracy. It had the game in its own hands, and only by excess of folly threw it away in little more than half a century. When "Farmer George" came to the throne, a peer was a man apart: his social influence was incalculable, and society itself a close borough; but before the death of that monarch the power was waning, and the wealth that supported it had been squandered. Then an outsider to force an entrance must have been distinguished in some way—by wit, perhaps, or by dress—for the gates were guarded strictly at a time when society was a small body and every one in it knew every one else. It was an age of good talkers, and the question put was not, as now, "Is he rich?" but "Is he clever?" Gradually, however, the admission into the charmed circle of the wealthy nabob took away from it the distinction of exclusiveness; and with the advent of the millionaire began the undermining of the influence of the erstwhile governing caste. Whether this is a good thing for the country remains to be seen; but, on the face of it, an aristocracy is preferable to a plutocracy.

There is still a widespread belief that the leading *beaux* were recruited from a lower social class

than those over whom they reigned; and this has doubtless arisen from the fact that the two most prominent exquisites in the history of the dandies of England, Richard Nash, who ruled Bath with an iron hand from 1705 until his death seven-and-fifty years later, and George Bryan Brummell, who wielded the sceptre of fashion throughout the land from 1798 until the year after Waterloo, were both men of humble descent. Most of the other leading *beaux*, however, were of good family. Skeffington, Lade, and Hanger had respectable forbears; Richard and Henry Barry were, respectively, the seventh and eighth Earls of Barrymore, "Jockey" was the eleventh Duke of Norfolk, and Lord Petersham the fourth Earl of Harrington. Of the origin of the later *beaux*, something will presently be said.

In whatever else the *beaux* differed from one another, the object of all was to astonish and to please, though perhaps the former was the prevailing desire; and to achieve their aim no sacrifice of comfort or money was thought too great. "And now, for all this perennial Martyrdom and Poesy, and even Prophecy, what is it the Dandy asks in return?" Carlyle put the question, which he proceeded at once to answer. "Solely, we may say, that you would recognise

his existence; would admit him to be a living object; or even failing this, a visual object, a thing that will reflect rays of light. Your silver or your gold (beyond what the niggardly Law has already secured him) he solicits not; simply the glance of your eyes. Understand his mystic significance, or altogether miss and misinterpret it; do but look at him, and he is contented. May we not well cry shame on an ungrateful world, which refuses even this poor boon; which will waste its optic faculty on dried Crocodiles, and Siamese Twins; and over the domestic wonderful wonder of wonders, a live Dandy, glance with hasty indifference, and a scarcely concealed contempt! Him no Zoologist classes among the Mammalia, no Anatomist dissects with care: when did we see any injected Preparation of the Dandy in our Museums; any specimen of him preserved in spirits? Lord Herringbone may dress himself in a snuff-brown suit, with snuff-brown shirt and shoes: it skills not; the undiscerning public, occupied with grosser wants, passes by regardless on the other side." [1]

It was, and is, easy to poke fun at the dandy—as easy, indeed, as it is to-day to make game of those quaint drawing-room coteries of half-educated

[1] *Sartor Resartus*—"The Dandiacal Body."

men and women who prate glibly of the decline of art and declare their ambition to be identified with "the new thought," whatever that may be—and few missed so excellent an opportunity to avail themselves of the use of their powers of raillery. Lytton promulgated a set of rules for the dress and conduct of the *beaux*;[1] and Professor Teufelsdröckh put forward some "Articles of Faith"[2] which no self-respecting exquisite might neglect.

"1. Coats should have nothing of the triangle about them; at the same time, wrinkles behind should be carefully avoided.

"2. The collar is a very important point; it should be low behind, and slightly rolled.

"3. No license of fashion can allow a man of delicate taste to adopt the posterial luxuriance of a Hottentot.

"4. There is safety in a swallow-tail.

"5. The good sense of a gentleman is nowhere more finely developed than in his rings.

"6. It is permitted to mankind, under certain restrictions, to wear white waistcoats.

"7. The trousers must be exceedingly tight across the hips!"

Even the minor poet did not omit to have his say, and with so popular a theme was certain to secure a transient popularity.

[1] See *suprà*, vol. i. pp. 172–6. [2] Carlyle: *Sartor Resartus.*

"A DANDY

"I do remember me in Hertford Street,
Walking at noon, I met an exquisite,
A thing, whose neck in Oriental tie,
Where not a crease is seen, so stiff withal
The powers of starch had rendered it, tho' made
Of finest muslin, that to my wondering gaze
(Unlike the ease of Nature's masterpiece),
It seem'd as 'twere a mere automaton;
And then its shape, so all unlike a man,
So tightly laced that 'twas self-evident
He walk'd in pain, if walking 't could be call'd,
Since from the earth to raise his languid foot,
It seem'd a labour too herculean;
But, still, thus mincingly, he reached the Bell—
There stopped. I, being anxious to o'erhear
The sounds this creature, nicknamed man, would utter,
Entered the room apologizing to it;
No answer receiv'd, save a low murmur,
For too fatiguing 'twas to articulate.
Finding it useless farther to intrude,
I asked the waiter who and whence he was?
'One of our College [1] Dandies,' he replied.
No longer wondering, straight I left the Inn."

It must be confessed that the dress of the *beaux* was better than their manners: though it is only fair to admit that, while Lady Susan

[1] The East India College.

O'Brien noticed "a certain rudeness of manners affected both by men and women," [1] Miss Harriet Raikes declared that "the manners of the Dandies were in themselves a charm, retained by some through infirmity and age." The latter lady, the daughter of "Tom" Raikes, may have been prejudiced in favour of her father's friends, but of her sincerity there is no doubt. "Their speech was pleasant, their language thorough-bred, their raillery conciliating, their satire—what they intended it to be," she added; "many among them highly gifted—doing all that they did well; the less apt, always to the point, letting it alone; without enthusiasm, without illusions—a school of gentlemen, liberal and open-handed; ephemeral as youth and spirits, yet marked by this endearing quality, that they remained (with few exceptions) true and loyal friends, tested through years of late adversity, and even Death's oblivion." [2]

Of the morals of the coterie perhaps the less said the better; yet those who would institute comparisons between then and now must remember that to-day people are more discreet and try to hide their misdoings, while in the Georgian era the duel of sex was in all circles

[1] *Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox.*

[2] Thomas Raikes: *Correspondence.* Edited by Harriet Raikes.

of society fought more or less openly. Nowadays, as Locker-Lampson put it happily, it may be said of folk that—

> " They eat, and drink, and scheme, and plod,—
> They go to church on Sunday ;
> And many are afraid of God—
> And more of Mrs. Grundy ; "

but this does not apply to the majority of those who lived in the first decades of the nineteenth century, for they had little fear of God and none of Mrs. Grundy. It is true that some years later Grantley Berkeley was horrified to see a woman of the town in a prominent box in the grand tier at the Opera, and exclaimed : " Had such a thing happened in the best days of the balls at Almack's, not one of those young men I then beheld in that box, and in such company, would have got his ticket or subscription at those first-rate assemblies, and they would have been dismissed an invitation at all the best houses in the season." [1] This statement, however, can scarcely be accepted in the light of our knowledge, unless, indeed, we suppose special license was granted to royalty, royalty's favourites, and dukes ! " The First Gentleman of Europe " had no objection to show his prefer-

[1] *My Life and Recollections.*

ence for many frail ladies, nor was he averse to appearing with them in public; the highly respectable consort of George III. received at Court that Lady Jersey who was the avowed mistress of her eldest son; nor did her Majesty or her husband give any sign that they had taken offence when in a box at the Opera opposite to that occupied by them the Duke of Grafton sat, for all the world to see, in the company of the notorious Nancy Parsons. Yet, in spite of these undeniable facts, it must be admitted that there was a general belief that greater license was permitted to the general company, especially at the play-houses. When George III. came to the throne the audiences were respectable and respectful, so that ladies could go to their boxes without interruption, and women of bad character congregated in an upper tier tacitly set apart for them; but in 1818 we find Lady Susan O'Brien complaining that a great change in this respect had taken place. "Now," she declared, "ladies of character can't go to the play without gentlemen to take care of them, to guard them, to remain with them in their boxes. The avenues are filled with prostitutes and men that go to meet and talk to them, and people are liable to see and hear very improper things. The new theatres are

built with a view to this, and apartments fitted up for company that never think of seeing the play. The side-boxes, which were always filled with the best company, are now frequently occupied by prentices, valets, and everybody that can pay. A man who had offered as a cook in the morning was seen by the gentleman who had refused him sitting in the side box near him with some ladies in the evening."[1]

The dandy, if useless, was as a rule a harmless creature, except for his influence, which, of course, was pernicious and wide-spread. In this utilitarian age, when the lounge suit is the common wear, and men of rank and wealth appear so attired in Pall Mall and St. James's Street even during the fashionable hours of the afternoon, it requires no slight effort of imagination to realise the influence of the *beaux* upon their generation. Yet it is undeniable that these splendidly caparisoned persons were universally regarded as of great importance by the society of the day; while of the fact that their power was political as well as social there is proof to hand in the alarm evinced by George IV. on the eve of his coronation on learning from Lord Gwydyr that "the feeling of the dandies is not favourable to your

[1] *Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox.*

Majesty." "I care nothing for the mob," exclaimed the King; "but I do care for the dandies!" and he endeavoured to propitiate the latter by inviting them to breakfast prior to the ceremony in one of the rooms of the House of Lords, by which simple device, it is recorded, he "regained all his popularity with them." The influence of the dandy, however, did not cease at the gates of society, but filtered down to less aristocratic circles.

"Not only multiform and ever new
Is Fashion, but her influence gen'ral too;
No more to pampered Luxury confined,
Th' infection now has seized the public mind;
A rage for fashion, finery, and Dress,
Pervades all ranks, nor do we see it less
In life's obscure and humble walks display'd,
Than in the City's gay parade.
To ape their betters, and to show a way,
Is now become 'the order of the day';
Nor does appearance any rule afford,
To know a Groom or Jockey from my Lord;
And quite as difficult it is to tell
My Lady from a mere plebeian Belle." [1]

To realise how demoralising was their influence, it is only necessary to remember that, like the Macaronies of earlier days, the Georgian dandies

[1] *The Fig-Leaf. A Satirical and Admonitory Poem.* 1810.

made prodigality their creed and gambling their religion; and to recall the list of those who spent their later years in beggary and those who died by their own hand. If their pernicious example was injurious to those of lower station, the effect upon their own class was terrible.

Yet it is impossible to deny the great *beaux* some tribute of admiration. Oscar Wilde has told us that Thomas Griffiths Wainewright, poisoner, art-critic, and man of letters, himself a dandy, recognised that Life itself is an art, and has modes of style no less than the arts that seek to express it;[1] and it was this theory—though it is doubtful if any one of them was aware of it—that inspired the *beaux*, and gave them—all unconscious of the artistic side of it—the desire to live splendidly and glide through life gracefully. Apart from this, there must be something great, some strength of character that, of course, could have been put to better purpose, in a man who could rule society, even though it was by a bow or a cravat, a pair of trousers or a graceful manner, a genius for practical joking or a witty tongue.

The dandy has his place in the history of manners—a history wider in scope and infinitely more difficult to write than, for instance, the

[1] *Intentions—Pen, Pencil, and Poison.*

history of politics; and when Captain Jesse concludes his biography of the greatest English exquisite with the expression of his opinion that "posterity will hardly accord to George Bryan Brummell one line in the annals of history," he shows a remarkable lack of insight, for, as Mons. Barbey D'Aurevilly has said—and this applies not only to Brummell, but also, though in lesser degree, to all other dandies: "*Souverain futile d'un monde futile, Brummell a son droit divin et sa raison d'être comme les autres rois.*" [1]

Du Dandysme et de Georges Brummell.

PART I

THE OLD BRIGADE

CHAPTER I

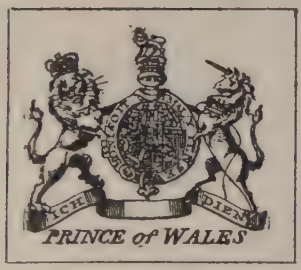
LE BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMME

From an etching by W. Heath.

1812, OR, REGENCY À LA MODE.

CHAPTER I

LE BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMME[1]



MANY nick-names were from time to time bestowed upon George IV. in his earlier years. He was called "Ben," after the fat porter at Carlton House and "The Rising Sun," an obvious allusion to his approaching regency; but best of all was the *sobriquet* bestowed upon him in an inspired moment by the Earl of Thanet, "*Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*." That fitted him admirably, for he was pinchbeck from top to toe: a theatrical figure stalking in the fierce light that beats upon a throne, without real dignity, real good nature, or real affection: a cruel husband, a false friend, a faithless lover, untrue to the one woman to whom he believed himself devoted.

[1] George, Prince of Wales, afterward George IV.; 1762–1830.

Devoid of generosity as of loyalty, even his friends' wives were not safe from his amorous advances : his friends, however, were not always complaisant, and once at least his Royal Highness was so maltreated that he was compelled to take to his bed, and to save appearances by giving out he was suffering from a sprain—whereas what injury he suffered was the result of a thrashing!

" Ye princes, as you love your lives,
Ne'er meddle with *your neighbours' wives*,
But keep your brittle hearts from tripping ;
Lest some rude *Lord*, to scare beholders,
Should compliment your royal shoulders,
With such another *royal* whipping.
So let us sing, Long live the King,
The Regent, long live he ;
And when again he gets a *sprain*,
May I be there to see." [1]

Liberal allowance must always be, and, indeed, is always made for the temptations that hover round royalty, and in spite of his rake-helly youth, there were many who hoped that in days

[1] Peter Pindar : *Royal Stripes ; or, A Kick from Yarmouth to Wales, with the Particulars of an Expedition to Oatlands, and the Sprained Ancle*. 1812.

" Peter Pindar " is a satirist little regarded to-day in his own country, but in 1900 appeared an admirable and learned monograph on the man and his work written by Dr. Theodor Reitterer of Vienna, entitled *Leben und Werke Peter Pindars* (*Dr. John Wolcot*).

to come this Prince might prove himself another Henry V.

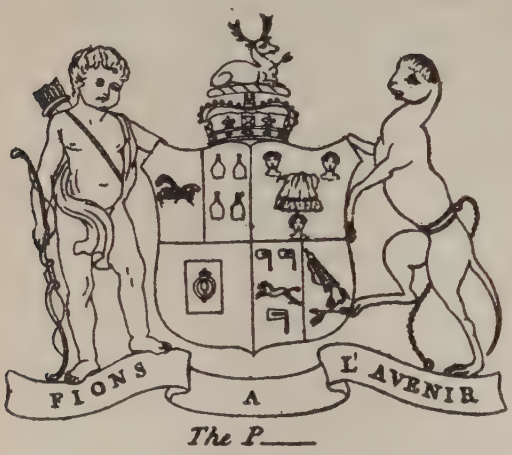
"For you, young potentate o' Wales,
I tell your Highness fairly,
Down pleasure's stream, wi' swelling sails,
I'm tauld ye're driving rarely;
But some day ye may gnaw your nails,
An' curse your folly sairly
That e'er ye brak Diana's pales,
Or rattl'd dice wi' Charlie,
By night or day.

"Yet aft a ragged cowte's been known
To mak' a noble aiver;
So, ye may doucely fill a throne,
For a' their clish-ma-claver:
There, him at Agincourt wha shone,
Few better were or braver;
And yet, wi' funny, queer Sir John,
He was an unco' shaver
For mony a day."[1]

That the poet's pious hope was indeed but a dream was slowly but surely proved, to the regret of all serious folk, who were sad to reflect that a foreign lady[2] should be able to say to a King of England, "Sire, it is princes like you who make democrats!" It may be thought that Herbert Spencer went too far when some one at Brighton, where the philosopher lived, spoke of

[1] Robert Burns: *A Dream.* [2] The Duchesse de Pienne.

George IV., and he dismissed the subject, saying he was "not interested in the criminal classes"; but the popular opinion of the day was concisely stated in a volume of burlesque heraldry:



The P——

"ARMS. First, azure, the prince's cap, feathers disordered, second, argent; four decanters azure; third, gules, a fringed petticoat between three maidenheads; fourth, sable, the ace of spades proper; fifth, argent; a horse courant between three rattles; sixth, gules, a quiver, the arrows scattered.

"SUPPORTERS. The dexter, Cupid; the sinister, a monkey proper.

"CREST. A deer wounded.

"MOTTO. '*Fions à l'avenir.*' ['Better days hereafter.']" [1]

[1] *The Heraldry of Nature; or, Instructions for the King-at-Arms: comprising the Arms, Supporters, Crests and Mottos, both in Latin and English, of the Peers of E—l—d. Blazoned from the Authority of Truth, and characteristically descriptive of the Qualities that distinguish their Possessors.* 1785.

This curious volume is valuable as showing contemporary opinion, and one further example of its contents may perhaps be given:

As a lad George was launched upon the town, in defiance of his father's wishes, by his uncle and aunt, the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland, at whose house, the *rendezvous* of the Opposition, he met Charles James Fox. Flattered by the attention paid him, he soon fell under the influence of that distinguished statesman, and numbered him and Sheridan among his intimates. The Prince of Wales was clever enough to be able to appreciate the great talents of these men, but he was not cast in the mould that enabled him to be satisfied with the company of genius even in its lighter moods. He relied upon Fox for guidance in political affairs, and for many years encouraged Sheridan to be a frequent visitor at Carlton House; but, even though Fox and Sheridan were hard drinkers and gamblers, he yearned for more reckless and dissolute company. Even a man of no importance might satisfy such a desire, and a

"THE —— [*i.e.*, The King].

"ARMS. First, argent, a cradle proper; second, gules, a rod, and sceptre, transverse ways; third, azure, five cups and balls proper; fourth, gules, the sun eclipsed proper; fifth, argent, a stag's head between three jockey caps; sixth, or, a house in ruins.

"SUPPORTERS. The dexter, Solomon treading on his crown; the sinister, a jackass proper.

"CREST. Britannia in dispair.

"MOTTO. '*Neque tanqunt levia.*' ['Little things don't move me.']"

prince, of course, had no difficulty whatever in finding such society. Soon he was to be found, day and night, surrounded by such folk as the fast-living Barrymores and Lades, with, eventually, John McMahon installed as his confidential adviser.

> "Once a boy in ragged dress,
> Who would little *Mac* caress?
> When in the streets, starved and sad,
> I was a *common errand* lad,"

"Peter Pindar" wrote of the man whom the Prince of Wales advanced to the dignity of Private Secretary and Keeper of the Privy Purse. "Peter" was a scurrilous fellow, and so what he said must always be accepted with caution; but, as a matter of fact, no one had a good word for McMahon. According to Raikes, he was "an Irishman of low birth and obsequious manners; a little man, his face red, covered with pimples, always dressed in the blue and buff uniform, with his hat on one side, copying the air of his master, to whom he was a prodigious foil, ready to execute any commission, which in those days were somewhat complicated."[1] What those complicated commissions were, it behoves a discreet

[1] *Portion of a Journal*

generation not to inquire. "Pander" was not the worst epithet bestowed upon the Private Secretary by his outspoken contemporaries: those who desire further particulars must turn to the pages of Robert Huish, who tells many stories of this worthy's shame. It must be remembered, however, that the tittle-tattle of that biographer is not always uninspired by a malicious love of scandal-mongering, and it can rarely be accepted without corroboration by some more reliable authority.

By right of birth, George, Prince of Wales, was the official leader of society, but, as a matter of fact, he was more than the titular head of the fashionable world, and it was not entirely owing to the accident of rank that he took his place among the exquisites. His title of "The First Gentleman of Europe" was bestowed upon him, not as heir-apparent to the crown of Great Britain, Ireland, and Hanover, but in consideration of his undoubted personal qualities. It is true that the qualities he possessed would certainly not have secured for him any distinction other than notoriety in these more democratic days, when even kings have to shield their vices from the public gaze; but in the last decades of the eighteenth and the first decades of the nineteenth centuries,

society forgave in one so nobly born dishonesty in the ordinary transactions of life, brutality to a wife, disloyalty to a mistress, the casting-off of friends, drunkenness, and general debauchery, and praised him highly because he bowed gracefully, was handsome, and possessed of the *bel air*, as many susceptible women knew to their cost, and dressed, if not in the best taste, at least extravagantly.

The *beaux* of the day accepted him as one of themselves on the day he made his first official appearance in society, for on that auspicious occasion he wore a shoe-buckle of his own invention, which, a contemporary has placed on record, was an inch long and five inches broad, reaching almost to the ground on either side of the foot. An heir-apparent who could invent such an ornament was worthy even of the companionship of a Sir Lumley Skeffington! No better introduction to polite circles could have been devised; but if any doubt survived as to whether the Prince was worthy to be enrolled amongst that select body of dandies which arrogated to itself the direction of the fashionable world, this was soon dispelled by the costume he donned at the first Court ball he attended. "His coat was pink silk, with white cuffs," we are told; "his waistcoat white silk,

embroidered with various coloured foil, and adorned with a profusion of French paste; his hat was ornamented with two rows of steel beads, five thousand in number, with a button and loop of the same metal, and cocked in a new military style." Could anything have been more elaborate? One would think not—until descriptions are found of his attire on subsequent occasions. Thus, we learn, when he took his seat in the House of Lords he wore a black velvet suit, richly embroidered with gold, and pink spangles, and lined with pink satin, and shoes with pink heels *à la Macaroni* of an earlier era; while, to give appropriate finish to the costume, "his hair was pressed much at the side and very full frizzed, with two small curls at the bottom." But Prince Florizel was not yet at the end of his resources, and, to prove that in this matter he could out-Herod Herod he devised a costume for a Brighton ball that dazzled all beholders. He made his appearance in a velvet suit of a dark colour, with green stripes, embroidered down the front and seams with silver flowers; a waistcoat of white and silver tissue, similarly ornamented; the ribbon of the Garter fastened with a shoulder-knot of brilliants, and the usual accessories of the stars of various other Orders. Even the imagination of the heir-apparent

could go no further, and he rested, content, the most over-dressed man of his day!

> "Bring thy best lace, thou gay Philander!
>
> . . . . .
>
> Put all thy wardrobe's glories on,
> And yield, in frogs and fringe, to none
> But the great R—G—T's self alone!
> Who—by particular desire—
> *For that night only*, means to hire
> A dress from ROMEO C—TES, Esquire—
> Something between ('twere sin to hack it),
> The Romeo robe and Hobby Jacket!
> Hail, first of Actors, best of R—G—TS!
> Born for each other's fond allegiance!
> *Both* gay Lotharios—both good dressers—
> Of serious Farce *both* learn'd Professors—
> *Both* circled round, for use or show,
> With cock's-combs, wheresoe'er they go!"[1]

Expense being no object to George, since for what he could not pay he was content to owe, he endeavoured to retain his reputation for dress to the end of his days. It is true in the later years of his reign he was careless about his attire in the privacy of his apartments, and would receive Ministers in a dirty flannel waistcoat and cotton nightcap; but on the rare occasions when he

[1] Thomas Moore: *Intercepted Letters, or, The Two-Penny Post-Bag. Letter* 8, *The Fête.*

appeared in public he was habited in all his glory. Batchelor, his valet, who entered his service after the death of the Duke of York, told Charles Greville that even a plain coat of the King, before it met with his Majesty's approval, often cost three hundred pounds, the expense being incurred by innumerable alterations and the many journeys consequently made between London and Windsor by Davidson, the tailor.

"My brave brother Tailors, come, straighten your knees,
For a moment like gentlemen, stand up at ease,
While I sing of our P——e (and a fig for his railers),
The Shop-board's delight! the Macænas of Tailors!
Derry down, down, down, derry down.

"Some monarchs take roundabout ways into note,
But *His* short cut to fame is—the cut of his coat;
Philip's Son thought the world was too small for his Soul
While our R—G—T finds room in a lac'd buttonhole!
Derry down, down, down, derry down.

"Look through all Europe's kings—at least, those who go loose—
Not a king of them all's such a friend to the Goose.
So, God keep him increasing in size and renown,
Still the fattest and best-fitted P——e about town!
Derry down, down, down, derry down." [1]

George had a mania for hoarding, and could

[1] Moore: *Intercepted Letters. Letter* 7.

never bring himself to destroy anything. When he died, his executors, Lord Gifford and Sir William Knighton, discovered, besides five hundred pocket-books, each containing small sums, that, however, made up the respectable total of ten thousand pounds, numberless love-letters, locks of hair, and other *souvenirs* of his *amours*. Not a single article of attire purchased during his lifetime had been got rid of—it is said he carried the catalogue in his head and could call for a suit he had worn half a century earlier; and many rooms were filled with his coats, waistcoats, breeches, pantaloons, boots, and shoes. These things were sold for fifteen thousand pounds, and it is reasonable to estimate that they must have cost a hundred and fifty thousand pounds!

Not content with leading the fashion among his own set, the Prince bitterly resented any departure from the rules he set down. When Lord Essex returned from Paris wearing shoeties instead of shoe-buckles, George took him to task; and when Lord Essex, knowing his Royal Highness's infirmness of opinion, remarked that in six months the latter would himself be wearing ties in his shoes instead of buckles, "I'll be damned," said the Prince, "if I'm ever so effeminate!" Whether or not his Royal High-

ness adopted the shoe-tie is not known, but it is a fact that he frequently followed the fashion set by others, even though, when first introduced, he had abused it. Gronow has related that, after Waterloo, in Paris trousers and shoes were worn by all the young men, only the older generation adhering to the knee-breeches; and that on his return to England in 1816 when Lady Hertford sent him an invitation to Manchester House "to have the honour of meeting the Prince Regent," he attired himself *à la française*; in black trousers, silk stockings, and shoes. He made his bow to the royal guest, and almost immediately was accosted by Horace Seymour: "The great man is very much surprised that you should have ventured to appear in his presence without knee-breeches. He considers it as a want of proper respect for him!" Gronow went away a sad and indignant man; but a month later his Royal Highness appeared in the dress he had censured!

The Prince, indeed, seems to have been happiest when he could find fault. When Lord Barrymore in his presence once put his hat on a chair, "A well-bred man," quoth George, "places his hat under his arm on entering a room, and on his head out of doors!" A well-bred man would not

have made that comment! Very annoyed when Brummell and Henry Pierrepoint called on Mrs. Fitzherbert one day when he was at her house, he observed that the Beau, after taking a pinch of snuff, placed his box on a table. "Mr. Brummell," he said, childishly querulous, "the place for your box is in your pocket, and not on the table!" And this was the man who cried when Brummell found fault with the cut of his coat! However, Lord Barrymore and Brummell could take their own part, and those who rebuked them did so at their own risk. It was a different and far more brutal thing to attack a lad of eighteen making his first bow to his sovereign. When Lord Charles Russell, who had just received a commission in the Blues, was commanded in 1825 to a full-dress ball at Carlton House, being unused to the uniform, he omitted to put on the *aiguillette*. Instead of taking no notice, the old King exclaimed in a loud voice, "Who is this damned fellow?" and as the boy tried to slink away without attracting further attention, he stopped him with, "Good evening, sir, I suppose you are the regimental doctor?" George suggested that all naval officers should wear red breeches and waistcoats; but this alarming proposal was met with such a storm of opposition from all ranks

of the service, that he was compelled to give way, which he did as ungraciously as possible, dismissing the subject with, "Damn 'em, dress 'em as you will, they'll never look like gentlemen."

CHAPTER II

GEORGE HANGER

From an etching by Richard Dighton (1808).

GEORGE HANGER.

CHAPTER II

GEORGE HANGER[1]

GEORGE HANGER was the grandson of Sir George Hanger, Bart., and third son of Gabriel, first Baron Coleraine of the second creation. How his father acquired this peerage is a matter which, George is careful to explain, will not bear investigation, and it has been concluded that it was obtained, probably in return for "value received," by the influence of a favourite of George II. Certainly Gabriel had no claim to it on any ground, and his only connection with it was through his sister Anne, who had married Henry Hare, third and last Baron Coleraine of the first creation. Yet, after the death of that

[1] George Hanger, fourth Baron Coleraine; 1751(?)-1824.

nobleman, without issue or heir to the title, Gabriel claimed it, and his claim was allowed in 1762. However, there is still in existence a letter, addressed presumably to the Duke of Newcastle, the First Lord of the Treasury, in which Gabriel made his application :

"My Lord Duke,

"The morning my Lord Gage did me the Honour to introduce me to your Grace, I found you so busy that I thought it then improper to mention what I had to say, which was this. As I make no doubt but his Majesty will against his coronation create some Irish Peers, as well as English, what I have to desire of your Grace is to ask the favour of his Majesty to make me a Peer of Ireland, to give me the Tytle of Lord Colerane of that kingdom, that title being extinct by the death of the last Lord Colerane, whose Lady was my first cozen, and left me the greatest part of their Estate. No one can be more zealously attached to his Majesty and his most illustrious family than I am, and I have a fortune equal to that or almost any title of nobility whatever. I have been in Parliament near ten years, and propose being in it again, and never did ask your Grace, or anybody, for anything yet. Therefore I hope I shall be indulged in this, to have your Grace's interest and recommendation to His Majesty to do me this Honour. It makes no increase of the nobility of Ireland, it will be only reviving a title that died with the last Lord. Therefore I hope your Grace will oblige me in this request, and I shall at

all times acknowledge the obligation with a great deal of gratitude.

"I am,

"Your Grace's

"Most Obedient

"And very Humᵇ. Servᵗ.,

"Gabᴸ Hanger.[1]

"Pall Mall,

"*December* 12*th*, 1760."

George Hanger was born in 1751, and, after attending a preparatory school, was sent to Eton, where he certainly did not put his time to the best uses, and seems from the first to have fallen into vicious habits. "At that early period," he has recorded, "I had a most decided preference for female society, and passed as much time in the company of women as I have ever done since. A carpenter's wife was the first object of my early affections; nor can I well express the nature of my obligations to her. Frequently have I risked breaking my neck in getting over the roof of my boarding-house at night, to pass a few hours with some favourite grisette of Windsor. During the latter part of my time at Eton, to perfect my education, I became attached to, and was very much enamoured of, the daughter of a vendor

[1] This letter is preserved in the Manuscripts Room of the British Museum. *English Private Letters*, 32916f. 15.

of cabbages."[1] From Eton he went to the university of Göttingen, and returned to England in January 1771 on being gazetted an ensign in the first regiment of Foot-Guards.

In the army Hanger distinguished himself chiefly by his harum-scarum mode of living, and by his adventures, most of which were of too delicate a nature to bear repetition, though his memoirs throw a light upon the company he kept. He met a beautiful gypsy girl, styled by him "the lovely Ægyptea of Norwood," who, according to his account, had an enchanting voice, a pretty taste for music, and played charmingly on the dulcimer. She won his heart with a song, the refrain of which ran,

> "Tom Tinker's my true love,
> And I am his dear;
> And all the world over
> His budget I'll bear."

He married her according to the rites of the tribe, introduced her to his brother-officers, and bragged to them of her love and fidelity; but alas! the song which enchanted him was based, not upon fiction, but upon fact, and after Hanger had lived in the tents with his inamorata for a

[1] *Life, Adventures, and Opinions of Colonel George Hanger.*

couple of weeks, he awoke one morning to learn she had run off with a bandy-legged tinker.

For some years he remained in the Foot-Guards, where he was very popular with his brother-officers; but in 1776 he threw up his commission in anger at some one being promoted, unjustly as he thought, over his head. His early love of soldiering, however, was not yet abated, and he sought and obtained a captaincy in the Hessian Jäger Corps, which had been hired by the British Government to go to America. He was delighted with his new uniform—a short blue coat with gold frogs, and a very broad sword-belt—and, thus attired, swaggered about the town in great spirits, to the accompaniment of his friends' laughter. During the siege of Charlestown he was *aide-de-camp* to Sir Henry Clinton; he was wounded in an action at Charlottetown in 1780; and two years later was appointed major in Tarleton's Light Dragoons, which regiment, however, was disbanded in 1783, when Hanger was given the brevet rank of colonel, and placed on half-pay.

At the close of the war Hanger left America for England; but his affairs were in such an unsettled state that he thought it advisable to go direct to Calais, where he remained until his friend, Richard Tattersall, could arrange matters.

Hanger attributed his insolvency at this time to the fact that, the lawyer to whom he had given a power of attorney having died, his estate was sold for the benefit of the mortgagee at half its value. This is probably true, but it is certainly only a half-truth, for his embarrassment was chiefly caused by his extravagance when he was in the Foot-Guards. He did not often play cards, but he was passionately fond of the turf; he kept a stable at Newmarket, and bet heavily on all occasions; though it is said that on the whole he was a considerable winner, and it is recorded that he won no less than £7,000 on the race between Shark and Leviathan. His pay of four shillings a day in the Foot-Guards did not, of course, suffice even for his mess-bills; and he wasted much money on dissipation, and more on his clothes. "I was extremely extravagant in my dress," he admitted. "For one winter's dress-clothes only it cost me £900. I was always handsomely dressed at every birthday; but for one in particular I put myself to a very great expense, having two suits for that day. My morning vestments cost me near £80, and those for the ball above £180. It was a satin coat *brodé en plain et sur les coutures*; and the first satin coat that had ever made its appear-

ance in this country. Shortly after, satin dress-clothes became common among well-dressed men."[1]

On his return to England Hanger stayed with Tattersall for a year, and then was engaged in the recruiting service of the Honourable East India Company at a salary which, with commission, never amounted to less than £600 a year; and was also appointed an equerry to the Prince of Wales with a further £300 a year. During his tenure of the latter office he bought horses for his Royal Highness, and attended to his racing engagements; but though some writers have suggested that he was concerned in the transaction for which the Prince's jockey, Sam Chifney, was warned off the turf by the Jockey Club, there is nothing in his career to warrant the assumption that he was guilty of dishonourable practices either at this or any other time.

Hanger was on very intimate terms with the royal scapegrace,[2] and participated in many of his escapades. There are many stories related of

[1] *Life, Adventures, and Opinions of Colonel George Hanger.*

[2] "He [the Prince of Wales] had among his intimates and associates some odd ones: an honourable major, who afterwards turned black diamond merchant, who wrote a catchpenny book, with a singular frontispiece to it, with some strange advice in it; and who also published a treatise on rat-catching, and disdained the title of peer which devolved to him on his brother's demise."—Westmacott: *Fitzalleyne of Berkeley.*

these boon companions, and one of the best is recorded in the pages of that unreliable gossip, Robert Huish.[1] At Brighton the Prince saw the beautiful Charlotte Fortescue, who, for a while, secured his attentions by pretending to endeavour to escape them, and by affecting a simple and innocent manner. Eventually, in an apparent burst of confidence she told the gallant of her impending marriage with a man for whom she had a great distaste, and, in the end, was induced to consent to avoid that hateful step by eloping with the Prince. On the very evening arranged for the departure of the lovers, Hanger presented himself unexpectedly at the Pavilion. "A hunt, a hunt, your Royal Highness," he cried. "I am in chase of a d——d fine girl, whom I met with at Mrs. Simpson's in Duke's Place; and although I have taken private apartments for her in St. Anne's East, yet the huzzy takes it into her head every now and then to absent herself for a few days; and I have now been given to understand that she is carrying on some intrigue with a fellow in this place. Let me but catch him, and I will souse him head and ears in the ocean." A description of the girl aroused the Prince's suspicions; and further conversation showed that the

[1] *Memoirs of George IV.*

Prince's innocent maid and the Colonel's "d——d fine girl" were one and the same. It was, however, thought a pity to disappoint her of an elopement; but when she stepped into the royal carriage at the appointed place, it was not the Prince that sat beside her, but her protector in one of the Prince's coats!

Never was there a better subject for the caricaturist, and Gillray was not the man to miss such an opportunity. In 1796 Hanger's notoriety had reached its climax, and innumerable stories, not to be repeated in a polite age, were narrated about him and his exploits. Every day at this time he might be seen in the St. James's district, making his way towards the Mount tavern in Lower Grosvenor Street, riding upon his little pony, his hat cocked on one side in the fashion still affected by modern "bloods," wearing an Indian silk handkerchief round his neck, and in his hand the huge bludgeon without which no buck was fully equipped. "Georgey a' Cock-Horse," he was called, and as "Georgey a' Cock-Horse" Gillray immortalised him. The pony, Punch, was Hanger's delight, and he would tell his cronies how Punch was a great weight-carrier, and that in Scotland he had seen as many as thirteen dead calves on a similar horse.

The boast reached Gillray, who at once executed a cartoon of Punch staggering beneath the weight of thirteen calves; and below the drawing wrote the following conversation:

"'Here they are, my lord [Galloway]; here's the stuck calves, by G—; no allusions, d—mme! almost forgot you were a north-countryman! Runt carries weight well! no less than thirteen, d—mme! Come, push about the bottle, and I'll tell you the story. In Scotland they eat no veal —no veal, by G—! On my honour and soul I mean no insult! but Tattersall, he swore— d—mme if he didn't, that on a small Scotch runt he saw, d—n my blood—how many d'ye think he saw?'

"'Saw what, Georgey?'

"'Why, calves, "staggering bobs," to be sure— why, d'ye think he saw seventeen?—no! but d—mme, by G—, he saw thirteen!!! and all just upon such another little "coal-horse" as my own.'"

The next few years were the happiest of Hanger's life, but misfortune soon overcame him. His employment under the East India Company came to an abrupt end owing to a dispute between the Board of Control and the Company, relative to the building of a barrack in this country to

receive the East India recruits prior to embarkation, which ended in a change of the whole system of recruiting, when Hanger's services were no longer required. This was bad enough, but worse was to come; for when he had served as equerry for four years, the Prince of Wales's embarrassed affairs were arranged by Parliament, who, making the essential economies, dismissed Hanger.

When this happened, having no means whatever to meet some comparatively trifling debts, he surrendered to the Court of King's Bench, and was imprisoned within the Rules from June 1798 until April in the following year, when the successful issue of a lawsuit enabled him to compound with his creditors.

"Twice have I begun the world anew; I trust the present century will be more favourable to me than the past," he wrote in his memoirs; and it is much to his credit that instead of whining and sponging on his friends, having only a capital of £40, he started in the business—he called it, the profession—of coal-merchant.

According to Cyrus Redding, who used to meet him at the house of Dr. Wolcot ("Peter Pindar"), Hanger had fallen out of favour with the Prince by administering a severe reproof to that personage

and to the Duke of York for their use of abominable language, and was no longer invited to Carlton House. This, it must be remarked, is extremely unlikely to have been the case, for Hanger's language was none of the choicest, and if there was any disagreement, this can scarcely have been the cause. Indeed, if there was a quarrel, it must soon have been made up; and undoubtedly the twain were on friendly terms long after, for when Hanger was dealing in coal, the Prince, riding on horseback, stopped and made friendly inquiry: "Well, George, how go coals now?" to which Hanger, who had a pretty wit, replied with a twinkle, "Black as ever, please your Royal Highness," and so late as 1805 there is a newspaper account of the Prince riding at Brighton in the company of Colonel Hanger and Colonel Leigh. Certainly Hanger felt no grievance concerning the alleged quarrel, for in his "Memoirs" he spoke in high terms of the heir-apparent in a passage that deserves to be reprinted, as one of the few sincere tributes ever paid to the merits of that deservedly much-abused person.

"If I were not to acknowledge the obligations I owe to the Prince of Wales, I should be worse than ungrateful; I should be the basest of men,"

he wrote. "In affluence, in poverty, at liberty, and when in prison, his kindness to me has never varied; but, for one action beyond all others I am truly indebted to him: when a prisoner, and deprived of the power of vindicating myself in public circles—where the ever-busy tongue of calumny tried to strip me of the only wealths I possessed—my character as an officer and a gentleman—he nobly came forward, pledging himself to the falsehood of the assertion, and stemmed the tide of public calumny, until justice and the law of the land proved the baseness of the aspersion, and covered my enemies with shame.

"For above sixteen years," he continued, "I have had the honour of his protection and acquaintance: it is hard, indeed, if I did not know him in so long a period of time, when I have viewed him in every stage, in health, on the bed of sickness, in convivial and in serious hours. This Prince is but little known to the world at large, who judge of him from report only. What is common report but a common prostitute? To make her the standard of truth is as erroneous as to make the cameleon the standard of colour. A day shall come, vipers, when ye shall be compelled to swallow the poison you here spit forth. By my

honour, and the sacred love I bear to truth, I am not induced to speak of him from his dignified station in life: I speak not of him as being Prince of Wales. Were he an ensign on half-pay, with no other support than a scanty pittance; or a clergyman serving three churches for forty pounds a year—two situations most deplorable, and the least to be envied in life—I would select him, above all mankind, for a companion and friend; and by his judgment I would be guided in the most weighty and intricate concerns. His enemies even acknowledge that he is the most accomplished and best-bred gentleman of the age; a master of languages, and an elegant classical scholar—three distinguished qualities rarely to be met with in one man."

Whether through the influence of the Prince of Wales or another, Hanger was in 1806 appointed captain-commissary of the Royal Artillery Drivers, from which he was allowed to retire on full pay two years later, a proceeding which drew some observations from the Commissioners of Military Enquiry in their seventeenth report, to which Hanger published an answer. As the years passed, however, the free manners and the coarse outspokenness of the Colonel jarred on the Prince, and slowly the men drifted more and more apart,

after which the former moved in less distinguished and probably less vicious company. Even so late as 1812, however, he must still have been high in the royal favour, for towards the end of that year Cruikshank portrayed him in a savage caricature, the letterpress description of which, inserted on the opposite page, ran:

"A tall, strapping-looking person, shabbily but buckishly attired, with a peculiar cast of countenance, now stepped forward, and cried out, 'My *name* is sufficient. Whoever has heard of [Hanger] must know that I am without a rival in the annals of debauchery. I claim no higher honour than to be my *Prince's friend'!*"[1]

The first Lord Coleraine (of the second creation) had long since been dead; Hanger's eldest brother, John, the second Baron, had followed his father to the grave, and the title was now enjoyed by his second brother, William, popularly known as "Blue" Hanger, from the colour of the clothes he wore in his youth. Charles Marsh declared him to be "perhaps the best-dressed man of his age,"[2] which is an ambitious claim to set up for any person in the days when, in fashionable society, clothes were more regarded than anything else in the world; but that there was

[1] *The Scourge*, November 2, 1812. [2] *The Clubs of London.*

some ground for the statement cannot be doubted, since "Tom" Raikes reiterates it. "He was a *beau* of the first water, always beautifully powdered, in a light green coat, with a rose in his buttonhole. He had not much wit or talent, but affected the *vieille cour* and the manners of the French Court; he had lived a good deal in Paris before the Revolution, and used always to say that the English were a very good nation, but they positively knew not how to make anything but a kitchen poker. I remember many years ago the Duchess of York made a party to go by water to Richmond, in which Coleraine was included. We all met at a given hour at Whitehall Stairs, and found the Admiralty barge, with the Royal Standard, ready to receive us, but by some miscalculation of the tide, it was not possible to embark for near half an hour, and one of the watermen said to the Duchess, 'Your Royal Highness must wait for the tide.' Upon which Coleraine, with a very profound bow, remarked, 'If I had been the tide I should have waited for your Royal Highness.' Nothing could have been more stupid, but there was something in the manner in which it was said that made every one burst out laughing."[1] "Blue" Hanger,

[1] *A Portion of a Journal*, 1831–1847.

From an etching by George Cruikshank.

The Scourge, November 2, 1812.

THE PRINCE REGENT, THE DUKE OF YORK, GEORGE HANGER, AND OTHER DISTINGUISHED *BEAUX*,

it will be seen, was as remarkable for his politeness as for his attire.

Heavy losses at the card-table forced William Hanger to go abroad to avoid his creditors, and he remained in France until the death of his elder brother in 1794, when, able to settle his affairs, he returned, completely transformed in manners and appearance into a Frenchman. Thereby hangs the story that shortly after he arrived in England he went to Drury Lane, when next to him in the dress-circle sat a stranger wearing top-boots. This would have been regarded as a gross breach of etiquette in France, and Lord Coleraine was not inclined to brook this affront to the company because he was in England.

"I beg, sir, you will make no apology," he said, with an innocent and reassuring air.

His neighbour stared in blank amazement. "Apology, sir! Apology for what?" he demanded angrily.

"Why," said "Blue," pointing to the offending boots, "that you did not bring your horse with you into the box."

"Perhaps it is lucky for you I did not bring my *horse-whip*," retorted the other in a fine frenzy of passion; "but I have a remedy at hand, and

I will pull your nose for your impertinence." Whereupon he threw himself upon Lord Coleraine, only to be dragged away by persons sitting on the other side of him.

Cards were exchanged between the combatants, and a duel seemed imminent. "Blue" went at once to his brother to beg his assistance. "I acknowledge I was the first aggressor," he said in anything but a humble frame of mind; "but it was too bad to threaten to pull my nose. What had I better do?" To which the unfeeling Colonel made reply, "*Soap it well*, and then it will easily slip through his fingers!"

This characteristic advice George Hanger was never weary of repeating, and he insisted that when any one wished to calumniate another gentleman, he ought to be careful to take the precaution to *soap his nose* first. "Since I have taken upon myself the charge of my own sacred person," he said, returning to the subject in his memoirs, "I never have been pulled by the nose, or been compelled to soap it. Many gentlemen of distinguished rank in this country are indebted to the protecting qualities of soap for the present enjoyment of their noses, it being as difficult to hold a soaped nose between the fingers as it is for a countryman, at a country wake, to catch

a pig turned out with his tail soaped and shaved for the amusement of the spectators."

"Blue" Hanger died on December 11, 1814, when the title and estates[1] devolved upon the Colonel, who, however, could never be persuaded to change his name. "Plain George Hanger, sir, if you please," he would say to those who addressed him in the more formal manner. It has been generally assumed that this was merely another of the peer's many eccentricities, but there was a kindly reason for it. "Among the few nobility already named," wrote Westmacott in the long-forgotten *roman-à-clef*, "Fitzalleyne of Berkeley," "more than one raised modest birth and merit to their own rank; one made a marriage of reparation; nay, even the lord rat-catcher, life-writer (and it was his own), and vendor of the black-article of trade, was faithful to his engagements where the law bound him not; and one of his reasons for forbidding his servants to address him as My Lord was that she might bear his name as Mrs. Hanger."

Hanger, now in the possession of a competence,

[1] "The first Lord Coleraine purchased the estates of Driffield and Kempsford, co. Gloucester, which now net £2,000 per annum, and, with those in the north of Ireland, make a total rental of £3,000; but should the encumbrances be removed, in four years the rental would be doubled."—*Gentlemen's Magazine*, December 1814.

made little change in his manner of living, and though death did not claim him until March 31, 1824, at the age of seventy-three, he never again went into general society. At the time of his succession to the peerage he was residing, and during the last years of his life he continued to reside, at Somers Town, whence he would occasionally wander, shillelagh in hand, to the Sol Arms in Tottenham Court Road, to smoke a pipe. This has been so often repeated, to the exclusion of almost any other particular of his life, that the comparatively few people who have heard of Hanger think of him as a public-house loafer; but this was far from being the case, for if he went sometimes to the Sol Arms, he would go also to Dr. Wolcot's to converse with the veteran satirist, or to Nollekens', the sculptor; or he would ride on his little grey pony to Budd and Calkin's, the booksellers in Pall Mall, where, leaving his horse in charge of a boy—he never took a groom with him—he would sit on the counter, talking with the shop-keepers and their customers.

Nor was Hanger illiterate, as were so many of the associates of his early years, and he could write very readable and intelligent letters, as is shown by the only two specimens that have been preserved. Both were addressed to his friend,

Major James, and the first contains an amusing hit at Colonel Bosville's dinner parties.[1]

"My Dear Charles,

"I forgot this was New Year's Day. I hear there is a good assembly of characters from which your absence cannot by any means be dispensed with, to assemble at Colonel Bosville's, to meet Messrs. Cobbett, Gale, Jones, Boney, and Frost. The first bishop that is to be made under the new *régime*, my old friend Parson East, after giving you all a sacrament at dinner, and an appropriate *oath*, will finish the evening service with a sermon; the text taken from the Song of Solomon chap. viii. ver. 8. You surely have not forgotten Captain Morris's song, made on Billy Pitt?

"'He went to Daddy Jenky,
By Trimmer Hall attended;
Good lack! in such sweet company,
How his morals must be mended!
Bow, wow, wow!'

"The foregoing verse is very applicable to you, and those *respectable gentlemen* above mentioned. Four more worthy characters are not to be found in any country. You know in what esteem I hold them. However, should it be, I will both write and cry your dying speech and piety in your last moments. It is your duty now, I think, to make an appointment with me, and to keep it.

"As ever most friendly, yours,

"*January* 1, 1813. "G. H.

[1] William Bosville (1745–1815) served in the American war, and, retiring from the Army in 1771, after travelling on the Continent,

"I think the last line of Morris's song was applicable to Lord Moira when he dined at Lord Liverpool's Cabinet dinner, thus altered:—

'He went to Master Jenky,
By Castlereagh attended;
Good lack, in such good company,
How his morals must be mended!
Bow, wow, wow!'"

"My Dear Sir,

"I cannot refrain from writing respecting a paragraph in the paper which has given me pleasure beyond expression. 'Louis XVIII. has sent 600 livres for masses to be said for the soul of Labedoyère, who was lately executed.' O, the bigot! In Heaven's name, when will all bigoted superstitious ceremonies cease, and the true worship of one God be established? You, I *know for certain*, if of any religion, are a Roman Catholic. You know it was only a few years ago that I found that out. Yet I am certain you have too much good sense to believe in transubstantiation, and in the ass on which Christ rode into Jerusalem, walking over the Mediterranean sea, and up the middle of the river into Verona, where the bones are shown to this very day, and sworn to by the priests. The flight through the heavens of the Virgin Mary's house to Loretto—*pro pudor!* When will these wretched and wicked follies cease? I hear Louis XVIII. has sent the Prince Regent the Order of the Holy Ghost. This is a sovereign remedy (said to be) against all

settled down in Welbeck Street, where he acquired some fame as a *bon vivant*.

calamities and misfortunes. However, it did not save Louis XVI. from the guillotine.

. . . . .

"I forgot to tell you something that will make you laugh. When my boy, John, was appointed to a place in the Custom House, they sent for the register of his birth and christening. It came out that he had never been christened at all. However, I got over it by procuring two persons to make oath of the day of his birth, and age. You will fully agree with me that this ceremony having been omitted, would be no impediment to his entering the kingdom of heaven, though it appears to be some impediment to his entering the kingdom of the Custom House. Pray, are all your lovely babes christened?

"How wretchedly affairs look in France! I have not the smallest doubt when the allied troops quit the country that it must terminate in a civil war. Pray write me all the news, for here I am absolutely rusticated, and know nothing. How shockingly that wretch, *our* beloved Ferdinand, is going on, in your *chosen religion*; he is the whole cause of the misery of that unhappy country. If you do not soon get something through Lord Moira's patronage, I recommend you to go to Spain. The education you got at the Jesuits' college, at St. Omer's, will strongly recommend you to an employment in the Inquisition; as the Jesuits are now re-established, they will again have great weight. God bless you, my dear Charles, and believe me a real and true friend,

"G. Hanger.

"Tompson, near Thetford, *November* 2 [1814?].

"Major James."

Hanger's intelligence does not rest only on the evidence of his letters, nor of his humour, for he was an industrious writer, chiefly on military subjects, in which he evinced great interest.[1] Reference has already been made to "The Life, Adventures, and Opinions of Colonel George Hanger," which appeared in 1801; but though it was stated on the title page that the volumes

[1] "Military Reflections on the Attack and Defence of the City of London: Proved by the Author to have been the most intolerable Part of Consequence to the whole Island, in the situation it was left in the Year 1794. By Lieutenant-Colonel George Hanger. 1795."

"Reflections on the Menaced Invasion and the means of protecting THE CAPITAL by preventing the Enemy from landing in any Part contiguous to it. A Letter to the Earl of Harrington on the proposed fortifications round London. A Defence of the Volunteer System and the means of employing it to the greatest advantage. And a correct Military Description of Essex and Kent, with the Military Roads and Strong Positions in those Counties. By Colonel George Hanger. 1804."

"Letter to the Right Hon. Lord Castlereagh, Secretary of State, etc., etc., from Colonel George Hanger; proving how one hundred and fifty thousand men as well disciplined as any Regiment of the Line need be, may be acquired in the short space of two months; with Instructions to the Volunteers, informing them what they are, what they are not, and what they may very easily, and in a short time, be made. To which is added a Plan for the formation of a Corps of Consolidated Marksmen; with a Dissertation on Light Troops, Regular, Marksmen, Riflemen, and Rifle Shooting. 1808."

"An Address to the Army; in Reply to Strictures by Roderick M'Kenzie (late Lieutenant in the 71st Regiment) on Tartleton's History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781. By the Hon. George Hanger. 1814."

"Colonel George Hanger to all Sportsmen. . . . Above Thirty Years' practice in horses and dogs: how to feed and take care of them . . . the rat-catching secret . . . To breed pheasants. . . . 1814."

were "Written by Himself," it has since transpired that they were compiled from his papers and suggestions by William Combe, the author of "The Tours of Dr. Syntax." It is an unpleasant work, and deals frankly with subjects tacitly avoided by present-day writers; but it is not without value, for it contains, besides excellent descriptions of debtors' prisons and the rogueries of attorneys at the end of the eighteenth century, common-sense views on social subjects—views much in advance of the general opinions of the day—and a frank avowal of hatred of hypocrisy. This last quality induced Hanger maliciously to relate a story of a dissenter who kept a huxter's shop, where a great variety of articles were sold, and was heard to say to his shopman, "John, have you watered the rum?" "Yes." "Have you sanded the brown sugar?" "Yes." "Have you wetted the tobacco?" "Yes." "Then come in to prayers."

The memoirs will perhaps best be remembered for Hanger's famous prophecy of the war between the Northern and Southern powers of the United States:

"I shall here relate a conversation that took place one day at his [General Dickenson's] table [at Philadelphia], before a large company; and an opinion which I gave relative to the future

destiny of the Government of that country; and I am of opinion that the state of affairs there is rapidly hastening a dissolution of the United States. At that time, when peace had been concluded but a few weeks, I was of that opinion; and remember well, when General Dickenson asked me my opinion of the Government and of its stability, I communicated my thoughts nearly in the following words: 'Sir, as long as General Washington, and the other principal military characters and leading men in Congress, who have brought about this resolution, are alive, the Government will remain as it is, united; but, when all of you are in your graves, there will be wars and rumours of wars in this country; there are too many different interests in it for them to be united under one Government. Just as this war commenced, you were going to fight amongst yourselves, and would have fought, had the British not interfered: you then, one and all, united against us as your common enemy; but one of these days the Northern and Southern powers will fight as vigorously against each other as they both have united to do against the British. This country, when its population shall be completed, is large enough for three great empires. Look, gentlemen, at the map of it; view how

irregular the provinces are laid out, running into each other: look particularly at the State of New York; it extends a hundred and fifty miles in length, due north; and in no place, in breadth, above fifteen or twenty miles. No country can be said to have a boundary or a frontier, unless its exterior limits are marked by an unfordable river, or a chain of mountains not to be passed but in particular places. The great finger of Nature has distinctly pointed out three extensive boundaries to your country: the North River, the first; the great Potomac, which runs three hundred miles from Alexandria to the sea, unfordable, the second; and the Mississippi, the third and last. When the country of Kentucky is completely settled, and the back country farther on to the banks of the Mississippi shall become popular and powerful, do you think they will ever be subjected to a Government seated at Philadelphia or New York, at the distance of so many hundred miles? But such a defection will not happen for a very long period of time, until the inhabitants of that country become numerous and powerful: the Northern and Southern powers will first divide, and contend in arms." [1]

[1] *The Life, Adventures, and Opinions of Colonel George Hanger*, vol. ii. pp. 425–9.

It is, however, not as a soldier, a pamphleteer, or a seer, that Hanger has come down to posterity; and while some may recall that in 1772 he distinguished himself by being one of the gentlemen who, with drawn swords, forced a passage for the entry of Mrs. Baddeley into the Pantheon, and eight-and-thirty years later rode on his grey palfrey in the procession formed in honour of the release of Sir Francis Burdett, it is for his eccentricities and his humour that he is remembered. Nollekens has related how one day, when he was passing the end of Portland Road, he overheard this conversation:

"What are you about, mother?" asked Lord Coleraine of his acquaintance, an old apple-woman, who was packing up her fruit.

"Why, my Lord, I am going home to my tea. If your lordship wants any information, I shall come again presently."

"Oh, don't baulk trade. Leave me your things on the table as they are; I will mind shop till you come back."

Nollekens watched the peer seat himself in the old woman's wooden chair, and waited close by until the owner returned. "Well, mother," said Lord Coleraine, "I have taken threepence halfpenny for you."[1]

[1] Smith: *Life of Nollekens.*

Although Cyrus Redding declared that Hanger was well known in his day for an original humour which spared neither friend nor foe, and although Hanger could sneer at those who accepted the invitations to dinner that Pitt was in the habit of sending to refractory members of Parliament—"The rat-trap is set again at the Pitfall," he would say when he heard of such dinner-parties; "is the bait *plaice* or paper?"—there were several who found themselves impelled to praise Hanger's generosity. We have it on the authority of Westmacott—and there can be no surer tribute than this, for Westmacott would far rather have said a cruel than a kind thing—that Hanger never forgot a friend, or ignored one because he had fallen upon evil days. When an out-at-elbows baronet came to see him, Hanger received him heartily, insisted upon his remaining as his guest for some time, and summoning his servants, addressed them characteristically: "Behold this man, ye varlets! Never mind me whilst he is here; neglect me if ye will, but look upon him as your master; obey him in all things; the house, the grounds, the game, the gardens, all are at his command; let his will be done; make him but welcome, and I care not for the rest."[1]

[1] *Fitzalleyne of Berkeley.*

For his kind heart much may be forgiven Hanger; and who could be angry with a man who possessed so keen a sense of humour as is revealed in this story? Late one evening Hanger went into his bedroom at an inn and found it occupied. The opening of the door awoke an irate Irishman, the occupier, who, in no measured terms, inquired, "What the devil do you want here, sir? I shall have satisfaction for the affront. My name is Johnson." Aroused by the clamour, a wizen-faced woman by Johnson's side raised her head from the pillow. "Mrs. Johnson, I presume?" said Hanger drily, bowing to the lady.

CHAPTER III

"JEHU"

From an engraving after Bromley.

SIR JOHN LADE.

CHAPTER III

"JEHU" [1]

THERE have been two baronetcies in the Lade family. John Lade, a rich brewer in Southwark, who represented that borough in Parliament at the time of Anne and George I., was created a baronet in 1830, and was succeeded by his nephew, also named John, who died unmarried on February 2, 1747. The latter left the greater part of his property to his cousin, John Inskipp, who assumed the name of Lade, and in whose person the title was revived. Sir John Inskipp Lade's son, John, the best known and the least reputable of his name, was born in 1759. At a very early age he came to town, where he plunged

[1] Sir John Lade; 1759–1838.

into fast society, and had earned such an unenviable reputation by the time he came of age, that on that occasion Dr. Johnson, who knew him as the ward of Mr. Thrale, greeted him with a set of satirical verses, the severity of which is almost savage :

" Long-expected one-and-twenty,
Ling'ring year, at length, is flown ;
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
Great Sir John, are now your own.

" Loosen'd from the minor's tether,
Free to mortgage or to sell ;
Wild as wind, and light as feather,
Bid the sons of thrift farewell.

" Call the Betsies, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care ;
Lavish of your grandsire's guineas,
Show the spirit of an heir.

" All that prey on vice or folly,
Joy to see their quarry fly ;
There the gamester, light and jolly,
There the lender, grave and sly.

" Wealth, my lad, was made to wander ;
Let it wander at its will ;
Call the jockey, call the pander,
Bid them come and take their fill.

"When the bonnie blade carouses,
Pockets full and spirits high—
What are acres? What are houses?
Only dirt, or wet and dry.

"Should the guardian, friend or mother
Tell the woes of wilful waste,
Scorn their counsels, scorn their pother,
You can hang, or drown, at last." [1]

The reference to a mother's counsel is touching, but in this case it partakes of the nature of poetic licence, for no one knew better than Dr. Johnson that Lady Lade was not the most suitable of mothers for a son given over to folly; and in support of this accusation we may call Miss Burney as witness. "Lady Lade," she says in her Diary, "is a tall and stout woman, has an air of mingled dignity and haughtiness, both of which wear off in conversation. She dresses very youthful and gaily, and attends to her person with no little complacency. She appears to me uncultivated in knowledge, though an adept in the manners of the

[1] Dr. Johnson's verses were remembered nearly two-score years later, for in Mrs. Piozzi's *Autobiography* there is a letter dated from Bath, May 31, 1817, in which the following extract occurs: "We have a caricature of Sir John Lade, going through all the stages of profligate folly and drowning himself at last, with Dr. Johnson's verses . . . written under."

world, and all that. She chooses to be much more lively than her brother; but liveliness sits as awkwardly upon her as her pink ribbons. In talking her over with Mrs. Thrale, who has a very proper regard for her, but who, I am sure, cannot be blind to her faults, she gave me another proof to those I have already had, of the uncontrolled freedom of speech which Dr. Johnson exercised to everybody, and which everybody receives quietly from him. Lady Lade has been very handsome, but is now, I think, quite ugly—at least she has the sort of face I like not. Well, she was a little while ago dressed in so showy a manner as to attract the Doctor's notice, and when he had looked at her some time, he broke out aloud into this quotation:

> 'With patches, paint, and jewels on,
> Sure Phillis is not twenty-one!
> But if at night you Phillis see,
> The dame at least is forty-three!'"

Sir John became one of the Prince of Wales's cronies, and for a while had the management of his Royal Highness's racing stable; but while it has been hinted of him, as it was of George Hanger, that during his tenure of that office he had some share in the transactions that resulted

in Sam Chifney, the Prince's jockey, being warned off the turf, it is but fair to state that there is no evidence in existence to justify the suspicion. Indeed, he seems to have been honest, except in incurring tradesmen's debts he could never hope to discharge; but that was a common practice in fashionable circles towards the end of the eighteenth century, and was held to throw no discredit on the man who did so—for was it not a practice sanctioned by the example of "The First Gentleman of Europe" himself?

Sir John was, however, a little given to sharp practices. Thus, he bet Lord Cholmondely a considerable sum that he would carry him on his back twice round the Steine, and a great crowd attended to witness "this extraordinary feat of the dwarf carrying the giant." When the moment came for the wager to be won or lost, there was a pause, and when Lord Cholmondely asked for what Sir John was waiting, the latter said calmly that he was waiting for his Lordship to strip. "I engaged to carry you, but not an ounce of clothing," he remarked; "so, therefore, my lord, make ready, and let us not disappoint the ladies." Naturally, Lord Cholmondely paid forfeit.[1]

[1] Shergold: *Recollections of Brighton.*

Less fortunate for himself was Sir John's endeavour to overreach Charles James Fox, who happened to owe him a racing debt, and one day went to him with the money. Lade began to make calculations.

"What are you doing?" asked his visitor.

"Only calculating the interest," the other replied, as if this proceeding were a matter of course.

"Are you, by G—!" said Fox, as he put the money back into his pocket. "Why, I thought, Sir John, that my debt was a debt of honour, but as you seem to look at it in another light, and intend making a trading debt of it, I beg to inform you I make it an invariable rule to pay my Jew creditors last. You must therefore wait a little longer for your money, Sir John, and when I next come across my money-lending Israelites, I shall most certainly think of Sir John Jehu, and expect to have the honour of seeing him in the company of my worthy friends from Duke's Place."[1]

Sir John combined with his mother's folly a taste for low life, and it was his ambition, apparently, to imitate a groom in dress and language—in this, indeed, he was so successful as to secure

[1] Robinson: *The Last Earls of Barrymore.*

for himself the nickname of "Jehu." It was his pleasure to take the coachman's place, and drive the "Prince's German waggon,"[1] and six bay horses, from the Pavilion at Brighton to the Lewes racecourse; and, in keeping with his *pose*, he was overheard on Egham racecourse to invite a friend to return to dinner in these terms: "I can give you a trout spotted all over like a coach-dog, a fillet of veal as white as alabaster, a 'pantaloon' cutlet, and plenty of pancakes as big as coach-wheels—so help me."

Dr. Johnson naturally took an interest in Sir John, and, when Lady Lade consulted him about the training of her son, "Endeavour, madam," said he, "to procure him knowledge, for really ignorance to a rich man is like fat to a sick sheep, it only serves to call the rooks round him." It is easier, however, to advocate the acquisition of knowledge than to inculcate it, and knowledge—except of power—Sir John Lade never obtained in any degree. Indeed, his folly was placed on record by "Anthony Pasquin" in—

[1] Barouches were so described on their first introduction into England. "A great number of gentlemen are arrived to pay court to the Prince, who particularly protects these races, and has always horses that run here. He was on the course on the box of his barouche; Sir John Lade as coachman by him."—*Jerningham Letters*, July 26, 1806.

"An Epigrammatic Colloquy,
"occasioned by Sir John Lade's ingenious method of managing his estates.

"Said Hope to Wit, with eager looks,
And sorrow-streaming eyes:
'In pity, Jester, tell me when
Will Johnny Lade be—wise'?
'Thy sighs forgo,' said Wit to Hope,
'And be no longer sad;
Tho' other foplings grow to men,
He'll always be—a *Lad*.'"[1]

When Sir John was little more than a boy, Johnson, half in earnest, proposed him as a fitting mate for the author of *Evelina*, so Mrs. Thrale states;[2] and, indeed, Miss Burney herself records a conversation in 1778 between that lady and the Doctor.

"*Dr. J.* 'Why, I don't hold it to be delicate to offer marriage to ladies, even in jest, nor do I approve such sort of jocularity; yet for once I must break through the rules of decorum, and propose a match myself for Miss Burney. I therefore nominate Sir John Lade.'

"*Mrs. T.* 'I'll give you my word, sir, you are not the first to say that, for my master the other morning when we were alone, said, "What would I give that Sir John Lade was married

[1] *Poems.* [2] Mrs. Piozzi: *Autobiography.*

to Miss Burney; it might restore him to our family." So spoke his uncle and guardian.'

"*F. B.* 'He, he! Ha, ha! He, he! Ha, ha!'

"*Dr. J.* 'That was elegantly said of my master, and nobly said, and not in the vulgar way we have been saying it. . . . Yet I don't know whether Sir John Lade should have her neither. I should be afraid for her; I don't think I would hand her to him.'

"*F. B.* 'Why, now, what a fine match is here broken off.'"[1]

The Doctor soon had no doubt as to the inexpediency of the union, and when Sir John, a little later, asked if he would advise him to marry, "I would advise no man to marry, sir," replied the sage, "who is not likely to propagate understanding"; but the baronet, who doubtless thought this was an excellent joke, and as such intended, crowned his follies by espousing a woman of more than doubtful character. When Sir John met his future wife she was a servant at a house of ill-fame in Broad Street, St. Giles, and, rightly or wrongly, was credited with having been the mistress of Jack Rann, the highwayman, better known as "Sixteen-string Jack," who

[1] *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay.*

deservedly ended his career on the gallows in 1774. Marriage did not apparently mend her manners or her morals, for, according to Huish —who, it must again be stated, was an arrant scandalmonger—she was for some time the mistress of the Duke of York, and also acted as procuress for the Prince of Wales; while her command of bad language was so remarkable that the Prince used to say of any foul-mouthed man: "He speaks like Letty Lade."

Like her husband, Lady Lade was a fine whip, and many stories are told of her prowess as a driver of a four-in-hand.

"More than one steed Letitia's empire feels,
Who sits triumphant o'er the flying wheels;
And, as she guides them through th' admiring throng,
With what an air she smacks the silken thong.

"Graceful as John, she moderates the reins;
And whistles sweet her diuretic strains;
Sesostris-like, such charioteers as these
May drive six harness'd princes, if they please."

Lady Lade offered to drive a coach against another tooled by a sister-whip eight miles over Newmarket Heath for five hundred guineas a side, but, when it came to the point, no one had sufficient confidence to take up the wager. There is,

From an engraving.

LADY LADE.

however, an account of another race in which she participated, though no particulars of it have been preserved. "Lady Lade and Mrs. Hodges are to have a curricle race at Newmarket, at the next spring meeting, and the horses are now in training. It is to be a five-mile course, and great sport is expected. The construction of the traces is to be on a plan similar to that of which Lord March, now Marquis of Queensberry, won his famous match against time. The odds, at present, are in favour of Lady Lade. She runs a grey mare, which is said to be the best horse in the baronet's stalls." [1]

Like the rest of his set, Sir John spent his patrimony, and fell upon evil days, which ended in 1814 in imprisonment for debt in the King's Bench, being, as Creevey happily puts it, "reduced to beggary by having kept such good company." Some arrangement was made with his creditors, and Sir John was released; whereupon Lord Anglesea, with whom in despair he had sought employment as groom or coachman, went to the Prince of Wales and insisted upon his giving Lade five-hundred a year out of his Privy Purse—no easy task, one may imagine, for "Prinney" was not given to providing for his old friends.

[1] *The Times*, December 24, 1794.

William IV. continued the annuity, but reduced it to three hundred pounds; and it was feared that at his death it would be discontinued. However, when the matter was put before Queen Victoria, she, hearing that Sir John was in his eightieth year, generously expressed the intention to pay the pension, which she put as a charge on her Privy Purse, for the rest of his life. Sir John was thus freed from anxiety, but he did not long enjoy her Majesty's bounty, for he died on February 10, 1838, having outlived his wife by thirteen years.

CHAPTER IV

"CRIPPLEGATE"

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CHAPTER IV

"CRIPPLEGATE"[1]

HENRY, eighth and last Earl of Barrymore, known as "Cripplegate," a nickname suggested by his clubfoot, was the younger brother of the better-known Richard, the seventh Earl,[2] who has come down to posterity as "Hell-gate." The latter was devoted to every sort of dissipation, and during his short life—he died in his twenty-fourth year—he attained a most unenviable notoriety. He married, on June 2, 1792, a young woman named Smith or Goulding, the daughter of a sedan-chairman and the niece of "Letty

[1] Henry, eighth Earl of Barrymore, 1793–1823.

[2] Richard Barry, Viscount Buttevant, born August 10, 1769; succeeded to the earldom, August 1, 1773; died March 6, 1793.

Lade"[1]; and contrived in about half a dozen years to squander three hundred thousand pounds, besides large sums won at cards and on the turf. This young scamp, however, was not a brainless fool, and at Wargrave, his house near Henley-on-Thames, the scene of various disgraceful orgies, he built a theatre on coming of age, appointed John Edwin the younger as manager, and engaged the exclusive services of "Anthony Pasquin"[2] to write plays for him. Not content with performing at Wargrave in semi-privacy, his lordship liked nothing better than to appear in public as an actor. George Selwyn complained to Lady Carlisle, on August 12, 1790, that he could not sleep until "Mie-Mie" and a friend had returned "from seeing that *étourdi* Lord Barrymore play the fool in three or four different characters upon our Richmond Theatre." "Well, but what did that signify? Nothing to me; let him expose himself on as many stages as he pleases, and wherever the phaeton can transport him, but he comes here, and assembles as many people ten miles around as can squeeze into the booth." Mr. Selwyn had not accompanied his adopted daughter to this entertainment, for, as he says,

[1] After his death, Lady Barrymore married, on September 23, 1794, Captain Williams of the Guards.

[2] John Williams (1761–1818), the author of many satirical poems.

"seventy-one is not an age to *Barrymoriser*." As time passed, however, the seventh Lord Barrymore seemed likely to turn into a more useful member of society, and when he accepted a commission in the Berkshire militia, he took his duties seriously; but his career was soon cut short by the accidental discharge of a gun, which wounded him fatally.[1]

It would have been a difficult task for any man to restore respect to the title of Barrymore, but the eighth Earl did not make any attempt to do so. A bosom-friend and frequent companion of his brother, Henry to a great extent followed in the footsteps of his predecessor; and indeed the town soon rang with stories of his excesses and his eccentricities.

"You see my friend Mr. Howarth[2] has been

[1] "Lord Barrymore, conducting a number of French prisoners from Rye to Dover by the Berks militia under his command, halted at the turnpike at the top of Folkestone Hill. After taking some refreshment, on regaining his seat in his vehicle a fusee which he had carried with him went off and shot him through the head. He died in a few minutes."—*Annual Register*, March 6, 1793.

[2] Humphry Howarth, M.P. for Evesham.

"Yesterday morning was ushered in a duel between Lord Barrymore and a Mr. Howard [*sic*], formerly a surgeon, or rather held up to be one, but now a fine gentleman and honoured with the Prince's protection. They quarrelled at whist about setting up honours, between twelve and one, and at five in the morning went off to settle matters provided with seconds (Sir John Shelley and Mr. Mellish), and after a mutual exchange of fire, became renovated friends."—*Jerningham Letters*, July 26, 1806.

adding to the amusement of Brighton races by fighting a duel with Lord Barrymore. His lordship was his adversary at whist, and chose to tell him that something he said about the cards was 'false'; upon which Howarth gave him such a blow as makes the lord walk about at this moment with a black eye. Of course a duel could not be prevented. When they got to the ground, Howarth very coolly pulled off his coat and said: 'My Lord, having been a surgeon, I know that the most dangerous thing in a wound is having a piece of cloth shot into it, so I advise you to follow my example.' The peer, I believe, despised such low professional care, and no harm happened to either of them." Thus Creevey wrote to Dr. Currie in July 1806; but according to Tom Raikes Howarth appeared upon the ground *naked*.

This was only one quarrel out of many in which the Earl was involved, not so much by a bad temper, but by an unrestrained sense of humour. Thus one evening at dinner at Windsor the question arose as to the possibility of taking the Castle by assault, and at once he and Colonel Cowper drew lines of attack and defence on the tablecloth, proceeding then to criticise each other's plan. Barrymore was getting the worst of the arguments, when he put an end to the

discussion by pouring out a glass of water and throwing it into the Colonel's face, saying, "Your plan is full of faults, for you have forgotten the Thames." It was only with difficulty that Colonel Cowper accepted the explanation that his lordship was drunk.

Practical joking was more fashionable in those days than at present, and so some excuse may be found for the indulgence in this puerile amusement. Both the seventh and eighth Earls of Barrymore had indulged in such pranks as changing signposts; crying in the streets at midnight in imitation of a woman's voice "Unhand me," and when the watchman came upon the scene, knocking him down and running away; and propping a coffin containing a dummy body against a street door, ringing the bell, and frightening to death the maid who obeyed the summons; but the younger man, left to his own resources, improved upon these crude designs. He used to sing a song, the chorus of which ran "Chip-chow, cherry-chow, fol-lol-di-riddle-low," and one evening he played a very cruel trick on Sir Alured Clarke, who, on his return from his American campaign, was given unduly to dilate upon the information he had acquired concerning the little-known tribes of Indians.

Barrymore determined to take advantage of this harmless foible, and guessing that Sir Alured could not have heard of the song, one evening, when surrounded by a group of cronies, he asked the General to tell them what he could of the "tribe of Chip-chows." The soldier fell into the trap, and gave a lengthy description, during which the company was hard put to it to restrain their mirth. Then the Earl asked for information concerning the "tribe of Cherry-chows," which also was forthcoming, to the great joy of his listeners. Upon this, Barrymore, who could no longer keep his countenance, burst into a great laugh, and said to the General, with an oath, "And what do you think of the Fol-lol-di-riddle-lows?" at which there was general merriment. "My Lord," said the General, "during all my travels, I have seen few savages so barbarous as yourself."

Sir Alured Clarke's verdict may be allowed to stand, for it is supported by all contemporary opinion; while Gillray, grouping the three brothers,[1] presented them in a caricature, as savage as the worst of their exploits, with the title of

[1] The third brother, Augustus Barry, who was born on July 16, 1773, and died on September 29, 1818, earned the sobriquet of "Newgate," owing, it is said, to the fact that he had been imprisoned in every gaol in the kingdom.

From an etching by Gillray (November 1, 1791).

RICHARD, SEVENTH EARL OF BARRYMORE (CENTRE); HENRY, EIGHTH EARL OF BARRYMORE (LEFT); AND AUGUSTUS BARRY (RIGHT).

"Les Trois Magots" ("The Three Scamps"), to which were attached doggerel lines that make up a tremendous indictment:

"To whip a top, to knock down at taw,
To swing upon a gate, to ride a straw,
To play at push-pin with dull brother peers,
To belch out catches in a porter's ears,
To reign the monarch of a midnight cell,
To be the gaping chairman's oracle!
Whilst a most blessed union Rogue and W——,
Clap hands, huzza, and hiccup out *encore*,
With midnight howl, to bay the affrighted moon,
To walk with torches through the streets at noon,
To force plain nature from her usual way,
Each night a vigil, and a blank each day;
To match for speed one feather 'gainst another,
To make one leg run races with his brother,
To coin new-fangled wagers, and to lay them,
Laying to lose, and losing not to pay 'em,
The *Magots*, in that stock which nature gives,
Without a rival stand!"

Such a man could not be tolerated in decent society, and Barrymore was avoided by his equals, so that he had a good excuse for following his natural bent and associating with low company. Being gifted with certain powers of entertaining, however, he became popular with the Prince of Wales, who found they had many tastes in

common, and in company with that great personage, he indulged in many disgraceful orgies.

He married a beautiful girl, Anne Coghlan, whose equally beautiful sister married the Duc de Castries, an old *émigré*;[1] and this union proved useful to the Earl when he fled, ruined, to the continent, for his brother-in-law made him a small allowance, upon which he subsisted until his death in the winter of 1823. This allowance was continued during the remaining eight years of her life to his wife, who made some amends for her husband's vices by devoting herself to ameliorating the condition of the poor of Paris.

"Cripplegate," in spite of his deformity, was a bold rider. "I ought to wear the spur on my toe instead of my heel," he often said, in allusion to his club foot; and he might often be seen riding his race-horses, clad in his racing colours of purple and orange. However, it was not so

[1] "Mrs. Connor, the widow of an agent employed here [Lismore], had three nieces, born and brought up in the lowest sphere of Irish life. They lived in a rude cabin on the rocky coast between Ardmore and Grange, where they used to serve food and whisky to the smugglers and frequenters of the paternal roof. The beauty of the two eldest was remarkable, and one became Countess of Barrymore, the other Duchesse de Castries. The Duke was an old *émigré*, whose poverty she shared in London. She was rather gay, but always devoted to him, and when the Bourbons returned to Paris, she found herself *grande dame* in the Hôtel de Castries."—Hon. F. Leveson-Gower: *Bygone Years.*

much as a rider, but as a driver he attracted attention. He was the first person to introduce the fashion of "tigers," and he used to drive a tall cabriolet with a diminutive attendant by his side. The first "tiger" was George Alexander Lee,[1] who afterwards achieved some fame as a musician and composer and, having lived for some years with Mrs. Waylett,[2] who tyrannised over him and wasted his money, but whom he married in 1840, on the death of her husband.

In a day when eccentricity was a sure passport to fame, it was much to have invented the "tiger," but Henry, Earl of Barrymore, secured a more lasting renown as one of the founders of the Whip Club.

[1] He was the son of Harry Lee, who owned the notorious Anti-Gallican Tavern, in Shire Lane, by Temple Bar, where Lord Barrymore and his friends held frequent orgies. "Harry Lee, in the course of his sporting progress, had distinguished himself as a pugilist and a second to pugilists. In his battle with Mendoza he had the advantage of being 'waited upon' by John Gully, Esq., M.P., and in return for the favour conferred upon him by that gentleman, he became his second in the memorable match between the M.P. and Bob Gregson, whose defeat secured the fame of his rising antagonist, and was the stepping-stone to his future prosperity and advancement."—Richardson: *Recollections of the Last Half-Century.*

[2] Harriet Waylett (*née* Cooke), a favourite actress of *soubrette* parts in London and the provinces.

CHAPTER V

"JOCKEY OF NORFOLK" AND "THE BARD"

The Royal Sovereign, was formerly to be seen by all admirers of Natural Curiosities
Nell H—t—n would rather under Thirty Stone, & in the absence of the Great Man, his
was six pence per Head, it is reported to weigh near Forty Stone.
place is agreeably filled by T—H— the celebrated collector on the Highway.
Pub.d May 1793. by H. Humphrey N.o 18 Old Bond Street

From an etching by Gillray.

Le Cochon et ses deux petits—or—Rich Pickings for a Noble Appetite.—*Vide* Strand Lane, Temple Bar, etc., etc., etc.

CHARLES, DUKE OF NORFOLK

CHAPTER V

"JOCKEY OF NORFOLK"[1] AND "THE BARD"[2]

CHARLES HOWARD, eleventh Duke of Norfolk, has no claim to be enrolled among the *beaux*, yet no account of them would be complete without some mention of him, for, though not one of them, he was much in their society, both as Earl of Surrey and after inheriting the dukedom which came to him on the death of his father in 1786. He spent his boyhood at Greystoke Castle, Cumberland, where he received some instruction at the hands of Roman Catholic tutors, who were presumedly incapable to perform their duties, for when he grew up it became clear that he was possessed of very little education; and though

[1] Charles, eleventh Duke of Norfolk; 1746–1815.
[2] Charles Morris; 1745–1838.

when he came of age as Charles Howard, junior, he was chosen a Fellow of the Royal Society, in 1794 President of the latter institution, and twelve years later, as Earl of Surrey, Fellow of the Society of Arts, these distinctions were certainly not bestowed because of his attainments in any branch of science or art. He was, however, interested in the history of his family, and encouraged the production of works on local antiquities, like Duncombe's "Herefordshire" and Dallaway's "Sussex."

The Duke, however, had very considerable ability, which to some extent neutralised the defects of his upbringing, and which, backed by his great position, gave him weight in the political world. Indeed, Wraxall tells us that as Lord Surrey he displayed in the Commons "a sort of rude eloquence, analogous to his formation of mind and body," and that in later years in the Upper House he "maintained the manly independence of his character, and frequently spoke with ability as well as information."[1] While still in the twenties he interested himself in politics; at the Carlisle election of 1774 encouraging the efforts of some of the freemen to take the representation of the borough out of the hands of the Lowthers, and at the elections of 1780 and 1784 offering him-

[1] *Posthumous Memoirs of His Own Time.*

self successfully as member for the borough. In Parliament he was a staunch adherent of Fox, and he held a Lordship of the Treasury in the Duke of Portland's short administration in 1783. He gave undeniable proof of courage when, at a great Whig dinner at the Crown and Anchor tavern in 1798, he gave the toast: "Our Sovereign's health—the Majesty of the People!"—for which offence against royalty he received his dismission from his Lord-Lieutenancy and was removed from the command of the West Riding of Yorkshire regiment of militia. Some years later he was consoled by being made Lord-Lieutenant of Sussex and Colonel of the Sussex regiment of militia; but he adhered to his Whig principles to the end of his days, and was superior to the temptation of the Garter, which the Regent tendered him at the time of the formation of Lord Liverpool's administration in 1812, if he would support that ministerial arrangement.

In early days the Duke changed his religion and became a Protestant, which in a Howard was an act of courage as great as his renouncing the use of powder and cutting his hair short in a day when hair-powder and a queue were the universal wear; but there was, it must be mentioned, some question as to his sincerity in this

matter. "When under the dominion of wine, he [the Duke] has asserted that three as good Catholics sate in Lord North's last Parliament as ever existed; viz. Lord Nugent, Sir Thomas Gascoyne, and himself," Wraxall has written. "There might be truth in this declaration. Doubts were indeed always thrown on the sincerity of his renunciation of the errors of the Romish Church; which act was attributed more to ambition, and the desire of performing a part in public life, or to irreligion, than to conviction. His very dress, which was most singular, and always the same, except when he went to St. James's—namely a plain blue coat of a peculiar dye, approaching to purple—was said to be imposed on him by his priest or confessor, as a penance. The late Earl of Sandwich so assured me; but I always believed Lord Surrey to possess a mind superior to the terrors of superstition."[1] Richardson, however, describes his general wear as being an antiquated coat of French grey cloth, black breeches, and black worsted stockings.[2]

When not engaged in political agitation, "Jockey of Norfolk," as he was called by his intimates, devoted his time and energies to the gratification

[1] *Posthumous Memoirs of His Own Time*, vol. i. pp. 32–3.

[2] *Recollections of the Last Half-Century.*

of his sensual appetites. In his youth he led a most licentious existence, and to the end of his days indulged in amours without delicacy and without number: indeed, it is said that no man, except Charles the Second, of procreative memory, "diffused his Maker's image through the land" more than he; and he was so little directed in his amours by taste, that Penn's epitaph was justified:

> "What Norfolk has been you may learn from this placard:
> 'He lived like a beast and died like a blackguard.'"[1]

Though his illegitimate offspring were so numerous, the Duke, however, had no legitimate issue, though he married, in 1767, Marian, daughter

[1] "The Duke, long addicted to self-indulgence, had an extensive and increasing list of annuities to pay to women of various grades, as the wages of their shame. It was said that these were paid quarterly, at a certain banker's, the cheques being drawn payable on the same day, to all the parties. Such frail pensioners were not likely to postpone their receipts; and, aware of this, the Duke used to sit in a back parlour, to have a peep at his old acquaintances, the name of whom, as each applied, he knew, as a clerk was appointed to bring the cheque as presented, for the Duke's inspection. There he would make his comments to a confidential person at his elbow. Of one he would say, 'I' faith, she looks as young as twenty years ago!' of another, 'What a dowdy!' and of another, 'What an old hag!' Occasionally, however, a feeling of compunction, or, perhaps, of caprice, would seize him, when he would desire the party to step in, and there, after inquiring of their welfare, strange to say, he would sometimes entertain them with a gratuitous lecture on morality!"—Angelo: *Reminiscences*, vol. i. p. 379.

of John Coppinger, of Ballyvoolane, county Cork, who died in the following year; and in 1771, Frances, daughter of Charles Fitz-Roy Scudamore, of Holme Tracey, who survived him. He was therefore succeeded in the dukedom by the next of kin, his third cousin, Bernard Edward Howard.

"Jockey of Norfolk—a man of some size,"

Byron wrote him down; and he was, according to all accounts, a heavy, clumsy, dirty-looking mass of matter, his coarseness of person relieved only by the intelligence depicted in his face.[1]

"Why, how can I sing?—I've done nothing but cram;
I've ate beyond measure or level:
My throat's full of chicken, my mouth full of ham,
And I'm sure I shall dream of the devil.
But, faith! for that matter, some more I could name
A'n't willing, I find, to grow thinner."[2]

So Charles Morris wrote, doubtless of "Jockey," who increased in bulk as he advanced in age, until he seemed incapable of passing through a door of ordinary size. "Yet," we are told, "he had lost neither the activity of his mind nor that of his body. Regardless of seasons, or impediments of any kind, he traversed the kingdom,

[1] Richardson: *Recollections of the Last Half-Century.* Wraxall: *Posthumous Memoirs of His Own Time.*

[2] *The Social Board.*

from Greystock in Cumberland to Holme Tracey and Arundel Castle, with the rapidity of a young man. Indeed, though of enormous proportions, he had not a projecting belly, as Ptolemy Physcon is depictured in antiquity; or like the late King of Würtemberg, who resembles in his person our popular ideas of Punch, and might have asserted with Falstaff, that 'he was unable to get sight of his own knee.'"[1]

The most remarkable thing about "Jockey" was his capacity to "swill wine like a Silenus, and gorge beefsteaks like a Buckhorse";[2] and it was to celebrate these achievements that the anonymous author of a volume of burlesque heraldic designs bestowed upon him:

"Arms. Quarterly; or, three quart bottles azure; sable, a tent-bed argent; azure, three tapers proper; and gules, a broken flaggon of the first.

"Supporters. Dexter, a *Silenus* tottering; sinister, a grape-squeezer; both proper.

"Crest. A naked arm, holding a cork-screw.

"Motto. *Quo me Bacche, rapis?* ['Bacchus, where are you running with me?']"[3]

[1] Wraxall: *Posthumous Memoirs of His Own Time.*
[2] Richardson: *Recollections of the Last Half-Century.*
[3] *The Heraldry of Nature.*

Many are the stories told of excesses at table. While still a lad he would often dine with his father at the Thatched House tavern, drink him and his friends under the table, and then, scarcely affected by these potations, sally forth to begin the night. He was a frequent visitor to the Beefsteak Club, in which Bohemian gathering he was in his element, though, even in that assembly of *viveurs* there were none who could drink glass for glass, or rather bottle for bottle, with him. Many were the jests made at his expense. When the Duke wanted to go to a masquerade in a new character, many suggestions were made and rejected; then Foote had a brilliant idea: "Go sober!" quoth he; but it is extremely improbable that this idea was carried out. When there was an inundation in Old Palace Yard, *The Times* relaxed into a smile as it printed a *jeu d'esprit*:

"On one side Duke Norfolk pushed forward with strife,
For he never liked water through his whole life;" [1]

and soon afterwards returned to the attack. "The Duke of Norfolk is attacked by the hydrophobia, he can't bear the sight of water. His physicians have prescribed wine. The Marquis

[1] March 1, 1793.

of Stafford, Marquis of Bath, and Lord Thurlow, who were present, sanctified this prescription with their most hearty consent.[1] Wraxall, however, finds excuse for his Grace on the ground that, "drunkenness was to him an hereditary vice, transmitted down, probably, by his ancestors from the Plantagenet times, and inherent in his blood."[2]

Even more amazing than the Duke's power of absorbing drink was his capacity for food. This has been remarked on by many memoirists, but perhaps the strongest impression was made upon Charles Marsh, who never forgot the sight. "His appetite, literally, grew by what it fed on," the latter wrote. "Two or three succeeding steaks, fragrant from the gridiron, rapidly vanished. In my simplicity, I thought his labours were over. I was deceived, for I observed him rubbing a clean plate with a shallot, to prepare it for the reception of another. A pause of ten minutes ensued, and his Grace rested upon his knife and fork; but it was only a pause, and I found that there was a good reason for it. Like the epic, a rump of beef has a beginning, a middle, and an end. The palate of an experienced beef-steaker can discern all its progressive varieties,

[1] February 17, 1794.

[2] *Posthumous Memoirs of His Own Time.*

from the first cut to the last; and he is a mere tyro in the business who does not know that, towards the middle there lurks a fifth essence, the perfect ideal of tenderness and flavour. Epicurism itself, in its fanciful combinations of culinary excellence, never dreamed of anything surpassing it. For this cut the Duke had wisely tarried, and for this he re-collected his forces. At last he desisted, but more, I thought, from fatigue than satiety."[1] And it is a fact that it was the Duke's custom before repairing to the Beef-steak Society to eat a dish of fish at the Piazza or some other coffee-house!

After realising the Duke's great fondness for wine and his immense capacity for partaking of it—he was not always sober in the House of Commons, though he was never drunk enough to make the mistake of joining in debate on these occasions—it is amusing to recall Thackeray's story of a certain visit of "Jockey" to dine and sleep at the Pavilion at Brighton. "The Prince of Wales had concocted with his royal brothers a notable scheme for making the old man drunk. Every person at table was enjoined to drink wine with the Duke, a challenge which the old toper did not refuse. He soon began to

[1] *The Clubs of London.*

see there was a conspiracy against him; he drank glass for glass; he overthrew many of the brave. At last the First Gentleman of Europe proposed bumpers of brandy. One of the royal brothers filled a great glass for the Duke. He stood up and tossed off the drink. 'Now,' says he, 'I will have my carriage, and go home.' The Prince urged upon him his previous promise to sleep under the roof where he had been so generously entertained. 'No,' he said, he had had enough of such hospitality. A trap had been set for him; he would leave the place at once, and never enter its doors more. The carriage was called, and came; but, in the half-hour's interval, the liquor had proved too potent for the old man; his host's generous purpose was answered, and the Duke's old grey head lay stupefied on the table. Nevertheless, when his postchaise was announced, he staggered to it as well as he could, and stumbling in, bade the postilion drive to Arundel. They drove him for half an hour round and round the Pavilion lawn; the poor old man fancied he was going home. When he awoke that morning, he was in bed at the Prince's hideous house at Brighton. You may see the place now for sixpence; they have fiddlers there every day; and sometimes buffoons and mounte-

banks hire the Riding House and do their tricks and tumbling there. The trees are still there, and the gravel walks round which the poor old sinner was trotted. I can fancy the flushed faces of the royal princes as they support themselves at the portico pillars, and look on at old Norfolk's disgrace; but I can't fancy how the man who perpetrated it continued to be called a gentleman."[1] No one nowadays regards "the First Gentleman of Europe" as other than a self-indulgent debauchee, and it is waste of time to attack that royal ruffian; but at the same time Thackeray's indignation at the plot—which, by the way, is not too well authenticated—to make the hardest drinker in England drunk is needless. Moreover, the Duke was on very intimate terms with his Royal Highness, who was actually dining with the Duke when the latter received the information that as a punishment for the toast to which reference has already been made, he had by his guest's father been removed from his offices. Some time after the friends quarrelled, but reconciliation was effected, and the Duke visited the Prince at the Pavilion in 1804. On that occasion Mrs. Fitzherbert was anxious that the Prince should not indulge in a drinking bout, and by a

[1] *The Four Georges.*

ruse summoned him from the table. "Jockey" suspected the cause of his host's withdrawal, and so clearly displayed his annoyance that the Prince invited Creevey to "stay after every one is gone to-night. The Jockey's got sulky, and I must give him a broiled bone to get him into good humour again." Heavy drinking followed supper, and the Duke and Creevey succumbed, but when "Jockey's" snores awakened Creevey, the latter found that the Prince and the Duke of Clarence were calmly discussing the shape of George II.'s wig.[1]

His devotion to the bottle had this advantage: that it enabled his servants to wash him when he was too drunk to know or to resist, for his Grace of Norfolk could never bring himself to make use of water for any purpose. Cleanliness was, indeed, foreign to his nature, and he rarely changed his linen, so that when one day he complained to Dudley North that he suffered from rheumatism and had in vain tried many remedies, "Pray, my lord," said North, "did you ever try a clean shirt?" The bacchanalian festivities in which he took part did not materially affect him, but shortly before his death he became somnolent and lethargic. "It sometimes happened at the close of the evening that the Duke, without

[1] *Creevey Papers.*

exhibiting any symptom of inebriety, became immovable in his chair, as if deprived of all muscular volition," Charles Marsh has written. "He would then request the bell to be rung three times; this was a signal for bringing in a kind of easy litter, consisting of four equidistant belts, fastened together by a transverse one, which four domestics placed under him, and thus removed his enormous bulk, with a gentle swinging motion, up to his apartment. Upon these occasions the Duke would say nothing; but the whole thing was managed with great system, and in perfect silence." [1]

The Duke lived in great splendour both at Arundel Castle in the country and at Norfolk House in London, but, curiously enough, he frequently took his dinner at comparatively humble coffee-houses. For years he was so constant an attendant at the Piazza coffee-room in Covent Garden that a place was always laid for him at a particular table, and his bottle of sherry and his bottle of port placed thereon in anticipation of his arrival. "Dinner as usual," was his Grace's only order; and it was his habit, as the meal never varied, not to call for the bill, but to give the amount, including the waiter's tip, as he passed

[1] *The Clubs of London.*

out. One night, however, some slight and inexpensive addition to the dinner had been made, and after he had put down the money he was stopped in the passage for the extra trifle. He paid, of course, but was so disgusted that he never again entered the establishment, which consequently lost the custom of those who used to come to see a duke eat. "Jockey" transferred his patronage to Richardson's.[1]

The Duke carried the intelligence he showed in political affairs into the domain of private life, though this did not prevent him from frequenting the gaming-tables. One night, however, he lost the sum of seventy thousand pounds in a "hell" in St. James's Street. Suspecting foul play, he put the dice in his pocket to examine the next morning, and took a bedroom in the house—for when he was up late he would sleep wherever he happened to be, even lying down to sleep, when intoxicated, in the streets or on a block of wood. The other players were alarmed, and eventually one of them, pistol in hand, went to the apartment of the Duke, who, fortunately for himself, was snoring, and changed the loaded dice for good ones. The next morning the Duke had the dice broken open, and, finding them good,

[1] Lord William Pitt Lennox: *My Recollections.*

paid his debts; but he had learnt his lesson, and never gambled again.[1]

Proud of his descent, he proposed to give a *fête* in 1783 to commemorate the tercentenary of the creation of the dukedom, and it was his intention to invite all the men and women descended from the first Duke, killed on Bosworth Field. Shortly after, he abandoned his intention, "having already discovered," he explained, "nearly six thousand persons sprung from him, a great number of whom are in very obscure or indigent circumstances, and, believing as I do, that as many more may be in existence." His pride of birth, however, was not excessive, and he was never happier than when present at the Beefsteak Society, where rank is less esteemed than brilliancy. If in his cups he was quarrelsome, when sober he was an agreeable companion, and at all times his conversation was cultured, pithy, and full of cleverness, which, we have it on the authority of "Coke of Norfolk," even the strongest port failed to eliminate; while even the somewhat truculent Kemble said he was most entertaining, and that with the Duke as a companion, "a long sitting seemed miraculously to compress itself into a most inconsiderable space."

[1] Steinmetz: *The Gaming Table.*

From an engraving by W. Greatbach.

CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS.

A name intimately associated with the Beefsteak Society and the Duke of Norfolk is Charles Morris, the Bard and Punch-maker of the Society. Born in 1745, the scion of a good Welsh family, he served in the War of Independence, and, on his return to England, exchanged to the Second Life-Guards. He sang many of his songs for the first time at the Beefsteak' dinners, and became very intimate with the Prince of Wales. He was a staunch Whig, and wrote such popular ballads as "Billy's too young to drive us," and "Billy Pitt and the Farmer"; but though the Prince of Wales, it is said, made him an allowance of two hundred a year, his political associates did nothing for him. Against this neglect, he complained good-temperedly enough in some verses entitled "The Old Whig Poet to his Old Buff Waistcoat":

"Farewell, thou poor rag of the Muse!
In the bag of the clothesman go lie;
A farthing thou'lt fetch from the Jews,
Which the hard-hearted Christians deny.

"Twenty years in adversity's spite,
I bore thee most proudly along;
Stood jovially buff to the fight,
And won the world's ear by my song.

"But prosperity's humbled my case,
My friends in full banquet I see,
And the door kindly shut in my face—
Thou'st become a fool's garment to me.

"Poor rag! thou art welcome no more;
The days of thy service are past,
My toils, and thy glories, are o'er,
And thou and thy master art *cast*."

. . . . .

The Duke of Norfolk one night at the Beefsteak Society said it was disgraceful that one who had given so much pleasure to many rich men should have to bring up his family on a pittance; but it never occurred to him to make any practical suggestion, which irritated Kemble, who, in his customary pompous phraseology, expressed his feelings. "Does your Grace sincerely lament the destitute condition of your friend, with whom you have passed so many agreeable hours? Your Grace has described that condition most feelingly. But is it possible, that the greatest peer of the realm, luxuriating among the prodigalities of fortune, should lament the distress that he does not relieve? the empty phrase of benevolence—the mere breath and vapour of generous sentiment, become no man; they are certainly unworthy of your Grace. Providence, my Lord Duke, has

placed you in a state where the wish to do good and the doing it are the same thing. An annuity from your overflowing coffers, or a small nook of land clipped from your unbounded domain, would scarcely be felt by your Grace; but you would be repaid, my Lord, with usury—with tears of grateful joy, with prayers warm from a bosom which your bounty will have rendered happy."[1] The Duke took the hint, and presented Morris with a house at Brockham in Surrey, where the aged poet ended his days.

In 1831, when he was in his eighty-sixth year, Morris retired from the Beefsteak Society, of which he was the principal ornament—at least it is fair to assume so, since the Society, after he left, became less and less attractive—and he took his leave of his old associates:

"In this close of life's chapter, ye high-favour'd few,
Take my Muse's last tribute—this painful adieu!
Take my wish, that your bright social circle on earth
For ever may flourish in concord and mirth;
For the long years of joy I have shared at your board,
Take the thanks of my heart—where they long have been stored;
And, remember, when Time tolls my last passing knell,
The 'old bard' dropp'd a tear, and then bade ye—
Farewell!"

[1] Timbs: *Clubs and Club Life in London.*

Occasionally during the next few years he came up from the country to revisit the scene of his triumphs, and, on the verge of ninety years, he made his last appearance at the Beefsteak Society at the pressing invitation of his fellow-members, who desired to present him with a large silver punch-bowl, on which occasion he delivered himself of a last poetical effusion:

"When I look round this board, and recall to my breast
How long here I sat, and how long I was blest,
In a mingled effusion, that steals to my eyes,
I sob o'er the wishes that Life now denies.

"'Twas here my youth, manhood, and age used to pass,
Till Time bade me mark the low sands in his glass:
Then with grief that alone Death can hide from my view,
I gave up the blessing, and sadly withdrew."

He preserved his faculties until his death in 1838 at the age of ninety-four, and he was so cheerful to the end that, "Die when you will, Charles," said Curran happily, "you will die in your youth!"

Morris's poetry was very popular in his day, and his songs published posthumously under the title, "Lyra Urbanica; or, The Social Effusions of Charles Morris," ran through many editions. The present generation, however, knows them not;

and no apology, therefore, is needed for reprinting one of the best of his lyrics—even though the last verse has become a commonplace of quotation.

Populous Cities Please Us Then.

"In London I never knew what to be at,
Enraptured with this, and transported with that;
I'm with the sweet of variety's plan,
And life seems a blessing too happy for man.

"But the country, Lord bless us! sets all matters right,
So calm and composing from morning till night;
Oh! it settles the stomach, when nothing is seen,
But an ass on a common, a goose on a green.

"In London how easy we visit and meet,
Gay pleasure's the theme, and sweet smiles are our treat;
Our morning's a round of good-humoured delight,
And we rattle in comfort and pleasure all night.

"In the country, how pleasant our visits to make,
Through ten miles of mud, for formality's sake,
With the coachman in drink, and the moon in a fog,
And no thought in our heads but a ditch or a bog.

"In London, if folk ill-together are put,
A bore may be roasted, a quiz may be cut.
In the country, your friends would feel angry and sore—
Call an old maid a quiz, or a parson a bore!

" In the country, you're nailed, like a pale in your park,
To some stick of a neighbour, crammed into the ark ;
Or if you are sick, or in fits tumble down,
You reach death ere the doctor can reach you from town.

" I've heard that how love in a cottage is sweet,
When two hearts in one link of soft sympathy meet ;
I know nothing of that, for, alas ! I'm a swain
Who requires (I own it) more links to my chain.

" Your jays and your magpies may chatter on trees,
And whisper soft nonsense in groves, if you please ;
But a house is much more to my mind than a tree ;
And for groves—oh ! a fine grove of chimneys for me !

" In the evening, you're screwed to chairs, fist to fist,
And stupidly yawning at sixpenny whist,
And though, win or lose, 'tis as true as it's strange,
You've nothing to pay—the good folk have no change.

" But for singing and piping, your time to engage,
You've cock and hen bullfinches coop'd in a cage ;
And what music in nature can make you so feel
As a pig in a gate stuck, or knife-grinder's wheel ?

" I grant, if in fishing you take much delight,
In a punt you may shiver from morning till night,
And, though with the patience that Job had of old,
The devil a thing will you catch but a cold !

"Yet it's charming to hear, just from boarding-school come,
A tip-up, tune-up old family strum;
She'll play 'God save the King,' with an excellent tone,
With the sweet variations of 'Old Bob and Joan.'

"But what, though your appetite's in a weak state,
A pound at a time they will put on your plate:
It's true as to *health* you've no cause to complain,
For they'll drink it, God bless 'em, again and again.

"Then in town let me live, and in town let me die,
For in truth I can't relish the country, not I;
If I must have a villa, in London to dwell,
Oh! give me the sweet, shady side of Pall Mall."

CHAPTER VI

"SKIFFY"

From an etching by Gillray (February 1, 1800).

"So Skiffy skipt-on with his wonted grace."—*Vide* Birthday Ball, *Morning Herald*, January 23, 1800.

SIR LUMLEY ST. GEORGE SKEFFINGTON.

CHAPTER VI

"SKIFFY" [1]

SIR LUMLEY ST. GEORGE SKEFFINGTON had at least more claim to distinction than most of his brother-fops, though it was their habit to sneer at him, especially after Byron gave them the cue. He was the grandson of William Farrell, a merchant of the city of London whose success in trade was sufficient to enable him to purchase Skeffington Hall in Leicestershire, and the son of the merchant's only surviving child, William, who, inheriting the property, assumed the name of Skeffington by royal warrant in 1772, and was fourteen years later created baronet. Lumley was born on March 23, 1771, and was educated

[1] Sir Lumley St. George Skeffington, 1771–1850.

at Henry Newcome's school at Hackney, where he showed some taste for composition and poetry, and a marked inclination to do anybody's work rather than his own, so that he was often punished for his apparent laziness, while another boy received praise for the lines Skeffington had written for him. The lad took part in the dramatic performances for which that scholastic institution had been noted for above a century, and acquired much applause, so states a writer in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, "for his graceful representation of Hamlet and his no less remarkable energy in Phocyas in Hughes's 'Siege of Damascus.'"[1]

While at Hackney Sheffington delivered an epilogue written by George Keate, the subject of which was the folly of vanity; but he did not take the lesson to heart, for, so soon as he was his own master, he set up as a leader of fashion. At an early age he began to be talked about, and such notoriety was the *Open Sesame* to Carlton House. The Prince of Wales condescended to discuss costume with the young man, who, thus encouraged, was spurred to fresh efforts, and acquired fame as the inventor of a new colour, known during his lifetime as Skeffington brown.

[1] February 1851.

Indeed, Skeffington, who was vain of his personal appearance, though, it must be confessed, without much reason, dressed in the most foppish manner; and as an example may be given a description of his costume at the Court held in honour of the King's birthday in 1794: "A brown spotted silk coat and breeches, with a white silk waistcoat richly embroidered with silver, stones, and shades of silk. The design was large baskets of silver and stones, filled with bouquets of roses, jonquilles, etc., the *ensemble* producing a beautiful and splendid effect." [1]

Though elated at being recognised as a *beau*, Skeffington did not desert his first love: he mixed much in theatrical society, and became on intimate terms with many of the leading actors, including Munden, John Kemble, Mrs. Siddons, "Romeo" Coates, and T. P. Cooke. He was an inveterate "first-nighter," and would flit from theatre to theatre during the evening; but he was not content to be a hanger-on to the fringe of the dramatic profession, and desired to be a prominent member of the coterie. He had abandoned any idea of following up his youthful successes as an actor, but he had so early as 1792, at the age of one-and-twenty, made his bow as an author,

[1] *The Times*, June 4, 1794.

with a prologue to Mr. Plumptree's comedy, "The Covenant Act," performed at the latter's private theatre at Norwich.

" With trembling steps, to court the Comic Fair,
A youthful Cantab quits collegiate care ;
Far from his hall he dares unpractis'd roam
(Which studious Science nominates a home),
Where erudition with the arts prevail,
And Learning's vot'ries trace the classic tale ;
That scene he leaves—to range the luring mead,
Where smiling Hope, and Inclination lead,
Yes, a mere lad, with commendable aim,
Adventures bravely for dramatic fame.
When the gay Muse entwines th' unfading wreath,
For bards whose numbers admirably breathe ;
With care she culls the *most luxuriant bays ;*
The richest recompense for worthy lays !
Our Bard for less gratuity achieves :
He only asks—*a few neglected leaves.*

" Ye learn'd, ye brave, ye generous, ye great,
Profess'd deciders of theatric fate,
Call forth that soft beneficence of mind
Which Nature gave, benevolently kind ;
Let it superior 'mid your bosoms shine,
Live in your words, and with your thoughts combine !
When imperfections in the scene appear,
Reflect, the Author's in his—twentieth year !
An age, when Judgment's regulated skill
Yields unregarded to the Muse's will ;

While passion, kindled by her sprightly lyre,
Wakes hope of fame, and elegant desire.

" Ye beauteous fair, who with distinguished charms
Fill every breast with exquisite alarms,
Deign with complacent levity to smile
Ere cynic wits maliciously revile,
Torture each line, and, in a critic's name,
Arrest him sternly on the road to fame !
Dramatic writing is no easy task ;
A first attempt may some indulgence ask.
Come, lovely nymphs, protecting looks extend,
And reign invariably the poet's friend.
Your kind assent will ev'ry care remove :
When *Beauty* sanctions—who can disapprove ?

" Till certain years have o'er men's functions beam'd,
By civil law they're merely children deem'd ;
And when they err, they've more compassion shown,
Than rash offenders who are fully grown.
Say, should not then the Drama's code admit
Another archive to decide on wit,
Which, fraught with soften'd justice, might agree
A minor author graciously to free
From strict austerity—from critic rage—
Till one-and-twenty makes the bard of age ?
Ye Belles ! that look proclaims ye coalesce
In sweetest pathos for a youth's distress !
Ye graver judges, to our wish accede,
Nor hardly censure this advent'rous deed ;
But, aiding steadily his *primal* cause,
Urge him to *Acts* which may deserve applause ;

Then, as maturity unfolds its days,
His *spark* of genius may become a *blaze*." [1]

Spurred by the praise bestowed upon this trifle, he penned complimentary verses to pretty actresses; but after a time he aspired to greater distinction, and endeavoured to secure literary laurels by the composition of several plays. His "Word of Honour," a comedy in five acts, was produced at Covent Garden Theatre in 1802, and in the following year his "High Road to Marriage" was staged at Drury Lane; but neither of these had any sort of success, and it was not until "The Sleeping Beauty" was performed at Drury Lane in December 1805 that the author could look upon his efforts with any pride.

To judge from a contemporary account, "The Sleeping Beauty," with music by Addison, was an agreeable, albeit an over-rated, entertainment of the nature of an extravaganza. "Mr. Skeffington," we are told, "has not confined himself to the track of probability; but, giving the rein to his imagination, has boldly ventured into the boundless region of necromancy and fairy adventure. The valorous days of chivalry are brought to our recollection, and the tales which warmed the

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, June 1792.

breasts of youth with martial ardour are again rendered agreeable to the mind that is not so fastidious as to turn with fancied superiority from the pleasing delusion. The ladies, in particular, would be accused of ingratitude, were they to look coldly upon the Muse of Mr. Skeffington, who has put into the mouths of his two enamoured Knights speeches and panegyrics upon the sex which would not discredit the effusions of Oroondates, or any other hero of romance."[1]

The book of the play was never printed, but the song, duets, and choruses of this "grand legendary melodrama" were published, and so it is possible to form some opinion of the merits of this production of the author, who is described by a writer in *The Gentleman's Magazine* as "the celebrated Mr. Skeffington, . . . a gentleman of classic genius, it is well known, figures high in the most fashionable circles." It is to be feared that Skeffington's fame as a man of fashion threw a glamour upon this critic, for to modern eyes the "classic genius" is nowhere in evidence, although the verses certainly do not compare unfavourably with the drivel offered by the so-called lyric writers whose effusions figure in the musical comedies of to-day.

[1] *Monthly Mirror*, vol. xxi. p. 220.

BALLAD

" One hundred years ago,
As well as in these times,
The world had specious show
And just as many crimes.
The courtier's ready smile
Could then false hopes bestow ;
Nay, beauty could beguile
One hundred years ago.

" Men breath'd the artful vow,
And maids that vow receiv'd ;
They flatter'd e'en as now,
And were as well believed.
Young hearts were often sold ;
For, if estate were low,
They barter'd love for gold
One hundred years ago."

RONDEAU.

" Where is Ellen, rural beauty ?
Ah ! in pity tell me where :
Well she claims a heart of duty,
Ardent love and tender care.

" Tho' time should fade the rose of youth,
The mind may still be vernal ;
Increase of years but strengthens truth,
And virtue is eternal !—

" Where is Ellen, rural beauty ?
Point the path, conduct me there ;

Reason sanctions fondest duty,
Ardent love and tender care.

"Some graces Time will steal away,
Some graces nobly cherish;
Beauty like flowers must soon decay,
But sense can never perish!

"Where then is moral beauty?
Ellen pure is Ellen fair!
Mine is still a heart of duty,
Ardent love and tender care."

Unexpectedly, however, "The Sleeping Beauty" achieved immortality, though not an immortality of the pleasantest kind, for the piece attracted the attention of Byron, who pilloried it in "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers."

"In grim array though Lewis' spectres rise,
Still Skeffington and Goose [1] divide the prize:
And sure great Skeffington must claim our praise,
For skirtless coats and skeletons of plays,
Renown'd alike; whose genius ne'er confines
Her flight to garnish Greenwood's gay designs;
Nor sleeps with 'sleeping beauties,' but anon
In five facetious acts comes thundering on,
While poor John Bull, bewilder'd with the scene,
Stares, wond'ring what the devil it can mean;
But as some hands applaud—a venal few—
Rather than sleep, John Bull applauds it too."

[1] Dibdin's *Mother Goose*, which ran for a hundred nights at Covent Garden.

For years before this satire appeared Skeffington was a personage in society, and if his plays secured him undying notoriety at the hands of the satirist, his costume was to produce the same result by the attention drawn to it by Gillray, who represented him in 1799 as "Half Natural," in a Jean de Bry coat, all sleeves and padding, and in the following year in a second caricature as dancing, below which is the legend, "So Skiffy skipt on, with his wonted grace." In these days, indeed, his appearance offered a very distinct mark for the caricaturist. Imagine a tall, spare man, with large features, sharp, sallow face, and dark curly hair and whiskers, arrayed in the glory of a dark blue coat with gilt buttons, yellow waistcoat, with cord inexpressibles, large bunches of white ribbons at the knees, and short top-boots! But in later years Skeffington went even further, for he distinguished himself by wearing a *vieux rose* satin suit and a wig, rouging his cheeks and blacking his eyebrows and eyelashes, until he looked like a French doll; while the air in his vicinity was made noxious by the strong perfumes with which he drenched himself. Horace Smith summed him up as "an admirable specimen of the florid Gothic"; and Moore lampooned him in Letter VIII. of "The Two-

Penny Post Bag," from "Colonel Th-m-s to Sk-ff-ngt-n, Esq."

"Come to our *fête*, and bring with thee
Thy newest best embroidery,
Come to our *fête*, and show again
That pea-green coat, thou pink of men,
Which charmed all eyes that last surveyed it;
When Brummell's self enquired: 'Who made it?'

"Oh! come (if haply 'tis thy week
For looking pale) with paly cheek;
Though more we love thy roseate days,
When the rich rouge pot pours its blaze
Full o'er thy face, and amply spread,
Tips even thy whisker tops with red—
Like the last tints of dying day
That o'er some darkling grove delay.
Put all thy wardrobe's glories on,
And yield in frogs and fringe to none
But the great Regent's self alone."

Skeffington's success with "The Sleeping Beauty" occurred at the time when he was most prominent in society. "I have had a long and very pleasant walk to-day with Mr. Ilingworth, in Kensington Gardens, and saw all the extreme crowd there about three o'clock, and between that and four." Lord Kenyon wrote to his wife on June 1, 1806: "The most conspicuous figure was Mr. Skeffington, with Miss Duncan leaning on his arm.

He is so great an author that all which is done is thought correct, and not open to scandal. To be sure, they looked rather a comical pair, she with only a cap on, and he with his curious whiskers and sharp, sallow face."[1]

Gradually, however, as time changed, he was left behind in the race, and was no longer regarded as a leader of fashion; and at the same time he was not fortunate enough to win further success as a dramatist, for his "Mysterious Bride" in 1808, his "Bombastes Furioso," played at the Haymarket in 1810, and his "Love no Time," performed three years later at Drury Lane, were each and all dire failures.

In January 1815 Sir William Skeffington died, and Lumley succeeded to the baronetcy. Sir William, however, had embarrassed his estates, and Lumley, to save his father from distress, had generously consented to cut the entail, and so had deprived himself of a considerable fortune. The comparatively small amount of money that now came to him had been forestalled, and he was compelled to seek refuge for several years within the rules of the King's Bench Prison. Eventually, though he failed in the attempt to regain an interest in the estates of his maternal family (the

[1] *Hist. MSS. Com.*, report xiv. app. iv.

Hubbards, at Rotherhithe), he came into possession of an estate worth about eight hundred a year. But when he again came upon the town, his old friends showed a marked disposition to avoid him; and when one day Alvanley was asked who was that solitary, magnificently attired person, "It is a second edition of 'The Sleeping Beauty,'" he replied wittily, "bound in calf, richly gilt, and illustrated by many cuts." Skeffington, though he presented a smiling face to the world, was deeply wounded by the desertion of his fair-weather friends, and when one day Planché congratulated him on his good spirits, "Ah! my dear M. Planché," he replied, letting fall the mask of cheerfulness, "it's all very well while I am in society; but, I give you my honour, I should heartily rejoice if I felt certain, after leaving this house, I should be found dead on my own doorstep."[1]

Skeffington now resided quietly in Southwark, where he still entertained members of the theatrical profession, but no longer the leaders of the calling —only the members of the adjacent Surrey Theatre. However, he still kept in touch with a few West-End performers, and there have been preserved some of the verses he wrote about Maria Foote.

[1] Planché: *Recollections and Reflections*, vol. i. p. 23.

He addressed that shining light of the dramatic firmament at the termination of her engagement at Drury Lane in May 1826:

"Maria departs! 'tis a sentence of dread;
For the Graces turn pale, and the Fates droop their head!
In mercy to breasts that tumultuously burn
Dwell no more on departure, but speak of return.
Since she goes when the buds are just ready to burst,
In expanding its leaves let the willow be first.
We here shall no longer find beauties in May;
It cannot be Spring when Maria's away!
If vernal at all, 'tis an April appears,
For the blossom flies off in the midst of our tears."

And three years later the rhymester inscribed a set of verses to the same actress:

"When the frosts of the winter in mildness were ending,
To April I gave half the welcome of May;
While the Spring, fresh in youth, came delightfully blending
The buds that are sweet, and the songs that are gay.

"As the eyes fixed the heart on a vision so fair,
Not doubting, but trusting what magic was there,
Aloud I exclaimed, with augmented desire,
I thought 'twas the Spring, when in truth 'twas Maria.

"When the fading of stars in the region of splendour
Announced that the morning was young in the east,

On the upland I loved, admiration to render,
Where freshness, and beauty, and lustre increased.

"Whilst the beams of the morning new pleasures bestowed,
While fondly I gaz'd, while with rapture I glow'd,
In sweetness commanding, in elegance bright,
Maria arose! a more beautiful light."

Henry Vizetelly met Skeffington towards the end of his life, and described him as "a quiet, courteous, aristocratic-looking old gentleman, an ancient fop who affected the fashions of a past generation, and wore false hair and rouged his cheeks," [1] who had, he might have added, a large fund of *histoires divertissantes* with which to regale his visitors.

He outlived all his brother-dandies, but to the end would wander in the fashionable streets, recalling the glories of his early manhood, attracting attention in his long-waisted coat, the skirts of which descended to his heels, but recognised by none of the generation that had succeeded his own. "The old *beau* in the corner [at Tattersall's] is Sir Lumley S——," wrote "Bernard Blackmantle" in "The English Spy," "who, without the means to bet much, still loves to linger near the scene of former extravagances."

[1] *Glances Back through Seventy Years.*

In other circles, however, Skeffington found listeners interested in his stories of the palmy days of Carlton House, when he was one of the leaders of fashion in society and prominent in the *coulisses*. He died, unmarried, in his eightieth year, and attributed his long life to the fact that he never stirred out of doors in the cold, damp winter months, but moved from room to room so as never to remain in vitiated air.

In an age when wit spared nobody, he was never known to say an unkind word of anybody, nor was the reason for this, as was said of another *beau*, that he never spoke of anybody but himself; indeed, his good-humour and vivacity brought him such extensive popularity that even *The Satirist*, whose hand was against every man, printed an appreciation of the dramatist, for which, however, the latter can scarcely have been grateful. "At Drury Lane Mr. Skeffington's play of 'The Mysterious Bride' has been performed for divers benefits; it is taken from the French, and by far the best effusion of his dramatic muse," wrote a well-meaning critic. "This author, being a man of fashion and a gentleman (two characters not always united), has been selected by the *minor critics* as a fit object for the exercise of their severity. We allow that his 'Sleeping Beauty'

was sufficiently soporific, and we have no objection to join in laughing at and ridiculing his eccentricities of dress and manner, but we by no means think the production of a dull melodrama a conclusive proof of a man's total deficiency of talent, nor that his wearing white breeches and parti-coloured waistcoats evinces an ungenerous or an unamiable disposition. We know that Mr. Skeffington possesses much good-nature and much goodness of heart, and can therefore laugh at, without being disgusted by, his harmless, though certainly ridiculous, propensities." [1]

Skeffington, indeed, seems to have been a very popular man, and to have extorted by his courtesy and gentleness many tributes denied to his fellow-dandies. "As to his manners," wrote another anonymous admirer, "the suffrages of the most polished circles of this kingdom have pronounced him one of the best-bred men of the present times, blending at once the decorum of what is called the *vieille cour* with the careless gracefulness of the modern school; he seems to do everything by chance, but it is such a chance as study could not improve. In short, whenever he trifles, it is with elegance, and whenever occasion calls for energy, he is warm, spirited, and

[1] *The Satirist*, vol. ii. pp. 542–3.

animated."[1] He had, however, his share of *nonchalance*, affected by the fashionable folk of his day, and the story is told that when, on a visit to a gentleman in Leicester, he was disturbed in the night with the information that the adjoining house was in flames, his sole comment was that this was "a great bore"; and when with difficulty he had been induced to move quickly enough to escape into the street, there, standing in his night-dress, bareheaded and with his hair in papers, he called out, "What are these horrid creatures about with so much filthy water, that I cannot step without wetting my slippers?"[2]

[1] *Monthly Review*, 1806.

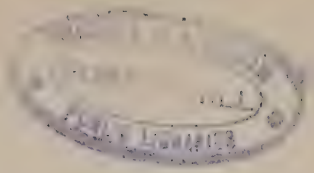
[2] William Gardiner: *Music and Friends.*

PART II

BRUMMELL AND HIS TIMES

CHAPTER VII

THE YOUTH OF GEORGE BRUMMELL (1778–1798)



CHAPTER VII

THE YOUTH OF GEORGE BRUMMELL (1778–1798)

IT is unnecessary to endeavour to trace George Brummell's origin further than his grandfather, William Brummell, a tradesman in Bury Street, St. James's, the upper part of whose premises were let to that Charles Jenkinson who afterwards became the first Earl of Liverpool.[1] Jenkinson, attracted by the intelligence of his landlord's son, also named William, made him his secretary, and, interesting himself in the lad, secured for him in 1763 a clerkship in the Treasury. There the young man, by hard work and attention to his duties, attracted the attention

[1] Charles Jenkinson (1727–1808), statesman ; created Baron Hawkesbury, 1786 ; created Earl of Liverpool, 1796.

of his superiors, was rewarded for his ardour by rapid promotion, and four years after he entered the office was, probably at the suggestion of his patron, appointed private secretary to Lord North [1] when that statesman became Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Grafton Administration of 1767. When North became Prime Minister, in 1770, he retained William Brummell, junior, in this confidential post, and later gave him the sinecure offices of Receiver of the Duties on Uninhabited Houses in London and Middlesex, Controller of the Hawkers' and Pedlars' Office, and Agent and Paymaster to the Out-Pensioners of Chelsea Hospital, worth in all about two thousand five hundred pounds a year. Probably, too, Lord North gave Brummell opportunities to follow his lead in many successful speculations, for when the Minister gave up the seals in 1782, the secretary also retired, and purchased The Grove, near Donnington Castle, where he entertained largely, and was visited by Fox and Sheridan. He served as High Sheriff for Berkshire in 1788, and died six years later. He had married a daughter of Richardson, the keeper of the lottery office, who predeceased him, after bearing three

[1] Frederick North (1732–1792), best known as Lord North, succeeded his father as (second) Earl of Guilford, 1790.

children: a daughter, who married Captain Blackshaw; and two sons, William, who married a Miss Daniel in 1800, and George Bryan. His fortune of sixty-five thousand pounds, representing a much larger sum in those days than in these, was to be equally divided between his three children on their coming of age. In after years his famous son pronounced his epitaph: "My father," he said, "was a very respectable valet, and kept his place all his life."[1]

George Bryan Brummell was born on June 7, 1778. At the age of twelve he went to Eton, where he soon achieved popularity with his unrivalled toasted bread and cheese, and distinguished himself among his fellows by his neatness in dress, his affectations, and his ready wit, a combination of qualities that secured for him even at that early age the respectful tribute of the designation, "Buck" Brummell. More than one good story is related of those early days, but perhaps the best is told *à propos* of a battle royal between some Etonians and a bargee, when the boys, having overcome their enemy, were about to throw him into the river. "My good fellows," remarked Brummell, in his most dandiacal manner, "don't send him into the river, for the

[1] *Memoirs of Hariette Wilson.*

man is evidently in a high state of perspiration, and it almost amounts to a certainty that he will catch cold." Amidst shouts of laughter the bargee was allowed to escape.

Bulwer Lytton in his fancy portrait of Brummell drew a picture of the lad in which he is represented as a terrible prig. "I came into the world with an inordinate love of glory, and a great admiration of the original. These propensities might have made me a Shakespeare; they did more—they made me Russelton! When I was six years old I cut my jacket into a coat, and turned my best petticoat into a waistcoat. I disdained at eight the language of the vulgar, and when my father asked me to fetch his slippers, I replied that my soul swelled beyond the limits of a lackey's. At nine I was inoculated with propriety of ideas. I rejected malt with the air of His Majesty, and formed a violent affection for Maraschino. Though starving at school, I never took twice of pudding, and paid sixpence a week out of my shilling to have my shoes blacked."[1]

[1] *Pelham*, chap. xxiii. In later editions of *Pelham*, Lytton inserted the following footnote: "It will be perceived by those readers who are kind or patient enough to reach the conclusion of this work, that Russelton is specified as one of my few *dramatis personæ* of which only the *first* outline is taken from real life: all the rest—all, indeed, which forms and marks the character thus briefly delineated—is solely drawn from imagination."

This is amusing enough, but only a half-truth, for the lad was manly enough in spite of his affectations, and threw himself with so much zest into the usual schoolboy doings that, according to Gronow, he became the "best scholar, best boatman, best cricketer, and best of good fellows." It is, however, only fair to Lytton to note that Richardson, in his "Recollections of the last Half-Century," declared that Brummell as a lad was a greedy, selfish, empty, conceited coxcomb, and he tells us, on the authority of one who knew the Beau in those early days, that the latter showed "the physical greediness of his nature and the essential vulgarity of his disposition" at the house of an old lady who lived at Kilburn, where Brummell at dinner, "having stuffed himself almost to bursting with the viands of the feast, actually burst into tears, and sobbingly regretted that his belly could not stretch itself to dimensions commensurate with his desire to gourmandise." This it must, on the other hand, be admitted is harsh judgment on a greedy lad, since all boys are fond, and most healthy boys over-fond, of the good things of the table; and really Brummell should be praised for his naturalness in letting his tears flow in such distressing circumstances.

From Eton Brummell went in 1794 to Oriel

College, Oxford, and, it is said, made an attempt to win the Newdigate, which, though at variance with the popularly conceived notion of his character, seems quite probable when it is remembered that the writing of verse was one of his pleasures through life. Many of these effusions have been preserved, and as an example may be given "The Butterfly's Funeral," which, published about 1807, found three thousand purchasers. "They are not of the gayest subjects," he wrote years later, when sending a copy of the lines to a friend; "but never mind! they were written at the period when 'The Peacock at Home,[1]' 'The Butterfly's Ball,[2]' and other trifling but meritorious poetical things of the same description, were in vogue with all the world in London."

"THE BUTTERFLY'S FUNERAL.

"Oh ye! who so lately were blythesome and gay,
At the Butterfly's banquet carousing away;
Your feasts and your revels of pleasure are fled,
For the soul of the banquet, the Butterfly 's dead!

[1] "The Peacock at Home" was written by Mrs. Dorset, a sister of Charlotte Smith.

[2] "The Butterfly's Ball" and "The Grasshopper's Feast" were composed by William Roscoe, the historian, for the amusement of his children.

"No longer the Flies and the Emmets advance,
To join with their friends in the Grasshopper's dance;
For see his thin form o'er the favourite bend,
And the Grasshopper mourns for the loss of his friend.

"And hark! to the funeral dirge of the Bee,
And the Beetle, who follows as solemn as he;
And see where so mournful the green rushes wave,
The Mole is preparing the Butterfly's grave.

"The Dormouse attended, but cold and forlorn,
And the Gnat slowly winded his shrill little horn;
And the Moth, who was grieved for the loss of a sister,
Bent o'er the body and silently kissed her.

"The corpse was embalmed at the set of the sun,
And enclosed in a case which the Silkworm had spun;
By the help of the Hornet the coffin was laid
On a bier out of myrtle and jessamine made.

"In weepers and scarves came the Butterflies all,
And six of their number supported the pall;
And the Spider came there, in his mourning so black,
But the fire of the Glowworm soon frightened him back.

"The Grub left his nutshell, to join in the throng,
And slowly led with him the Bookworm along!
Who wept his poor neighbour's unfortunate doom,
And wrote these few lines, to be placed on her tomb:

"EPITAPH.

" ' At this solemn spot, where the green rushes wave,
Here sadly we bent o'er the Butterfly's grave ;
'Twas here we to beauty our obsequies paid,
And hallow'd the mound which her ashes had made.

" ' And here shall the daisy and violet blow,
And the lily discover her bosom of snow ;
While under the leaf, in the evenings of spring,
Still mourning his friend, shall the Grasshopper sing.' "

It may here be stated, the view that Brummell was an illiterate man, as was his famous predecessor, Richard Nash, of Bath, is entirely opposed to fact. He could write a good letter, as will presently be seen, and, without setting up for him any pretensions to learning, it is clear he was fond of books, which he collected enthusiastically, and in which, when he fell upon evil days, he found entertainment. In prison he read a French translation of Byron's life and some stories of Washington Irving; he spoke with enthusiasm of "The Last Days of Pompeii," which shows at least that he was not blinded by prejudice against the author of what he stigmatised as "that grossest of caricatures," Russelton; and he was found one morning lying full-length on his hearthrug in a paroxysm of laughter, the cause of which he

could only explain in gasps: "'Gilbert Gur-urney'—oh! oh!—'Gilbert Gurney!'"[1]

It was an intelligent, though perhaps not a deep, appreciation of letters that prompted Brummell to start his famous Album. "If you are fond of poetry, and you have not anything more dull to read," he wrote in April 1834, when sending the precious volume to a lady at Caen who had befriended him, "you may, perhaps, find something in my Album to yawn over, if it does not actually close your eyes; what it contains was written in other and happier days, and most of them were given to me by the authors *themselves*, long before their minor productions had assumed any other form than that of manuscript: such as the Duchess of Devonshire, poor Byron, Sheridan, and Lords Erskine and John Townshend—all now peacefully sleeping in their graves! The principal part of those verses that are not recommended by the name being attached to them, are the namby-pamby compositions of an unfortunate person who shall be nameless, but whom you cut dead during the last several evenings, and who, in desperate consequence, has been measured for a winding-sheet this morning." Many notabilities, besides those mentioned above,

[1] Theodore Hook's now neglected novel, published in 1838.

contributed to the Album—Sheridan's son Tom, for instance, and such great men in the political world as Charles James Fox, George Canning, and Lord Melbourne, the last of whom therein apostrophised the bust of Fox in the following lines :

" Live, marble, live ! for there's a sacred trust,
The patriot's name that speaks a noble mind ;
Live, that our sons may stand before thy bust,
And hail the benefactor of mankind !
This was the man, who, midst the tempest's rage,
A mark of safety to the nation stood ;
Warn'd with prophetic voice a servile age,
And strove to quench the ruthless thirst for blood.
This was the man, whose ever deathless name
Recalls his generous life's illustrious scenes ;
To bless his fellow-creatures was his aim,
And universal liberty his means ! " [1]

About the time of his father's death Brummell left the university to enter the army, and on June 17, 1794, he was presented by the Prince of Wales to a cornetcy in the Tenth Light Dragoons, of which regiment his Royal Highness

[1] Brummell was also a collector of prints and pictures, and himself had some talent in water-colours. " I am quite unhappy that I have not any more drawings to send you," he wrote to a friend about 1800, " and I have equally to regret my inability to plead any better excuse for the poverty of my *portefeuille* than my natural idleness, and the frequent depredations of my friends."—*Hist. MSS. Com.*, Report xv., App. vi.

was colonel-in-chief. There are several contradictory accounts extant of the first meeting of the lad with the heir-apparent. One version is that Brummell was visiting his aunt, Mrs. Searle, who had a small cottage with stables for cows on the Piccadilly side of the Green Park, when the Prince, accompanied by the beautiful Lady Salisbury, stopped to see the cows milked, noticed Brummell, and attracted by his frank bearing and well-groomed appearance, on learning that he was to be a soldier, promised him a commission.[1] More probably, however, the acquaintance began by the boy being presented to his Royal Highness on the Terrace at Windsor, or at Devonshire House, where the youthful "Buck," a great favourite with the Duchess, made his first appearance in society.

The Tenth Light Dragoons was, of course, the pink of fashion, and among the officers were Lord Petersham, Lord R. Edward Somerset, Lord Charles Ker, Lord Charles Manners and Lord Robert Manners, with all of whom Brummell cemented a friendship that was broken only by

[1] "But what is most singular, a striking change took place in my nephew's behaviour; for so soon as he began to mix in society with the Prince, his visits to me became less and less frequent, and now he hardly ever calls to see his old aunt."—Mrs. Searle's narrative in Gronow's *Reminiscences*.

death. The regiment being nearly always stationed in the neighbourhood of its royal colonel, at London or Brighton—at which latter place, at a grand review, the Beau was thrown from his horse, and broke his classical Roman nose—Brummell was thus at once launched in the Prince's set. It may be assumed that the cornet did not take his duties very seriously, and, indeed, an amusing story is told of his ignorance of the rudiments of drill. He was so frequently in personal attendance on the Prince of Wales that, it is said, he did not even know the troop to which he was attached, and on parade could find it only because one of the men in the front rank had an enormous blue nose. During one of his many absences from the regiment, however, alterations were made consequent upon the enrolment of some recruits, and on his return the subaltern, ignorant of the change, arriving late upon parade, galloped along the line until he saw his man. "How now, Mr. Brummell? you are with the wrong troop!" shouted the angry colonel. The young officer turned in his saddle to assure himself that the blue-nosed trooper was behind him. "No, no," he murmured indignantly, "I know better than that! A pretty thing, indeed, if I did not know my own troop."

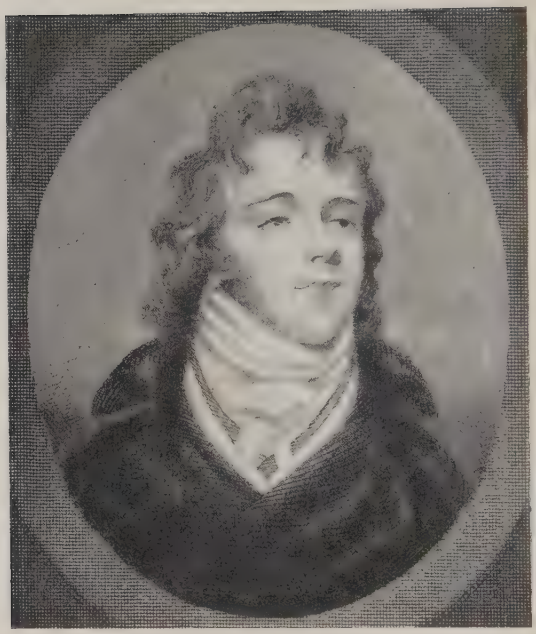
On the arrival of Princess Caroline of Brunswick, Brummell went with Lord Edward Somerset, who was in command of the escort sent to bring the future Queen of England from Greenwich to London, and at the wedding was in attendance upon the Prince of Wales. The Beau thought the Princess "a very handsome and desirable-looking woman"; but, owing to the almost immediate rupture between the royal couple, he had but slight acquaintance with her.

Brummell took so little interest in soldiering that there is no doubt that his promotion to a captaincy, on June 1, 1796, was due only to the favour of his royal patron; and soon he found his duties so irksome, as Beau Nash had done before him, that he longed to resign. Some said this was because he desired to exchange his club for White's, while others insisted that he desired to retire into private life because of his objection to the use of hair-powder, then compulsory in the army; but, probably from fear of offending the Prince, he held his captaincy for two years, at the end of which period the regiment was ordered to Manchester. That was the last straw! Brummell at Manchester was impossible, and forthwith he asked his royal patron's permission

to hand in his papers. The Prince hummed and hawed, and raised many objections. "*You* will not be there, sir," said the tactful Beau. Without more ado his Royal Highness granted the request.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SUPREME DANDY



From an engraving after a miniature by John Cooke.

GEORGE BRYAN BRUMMELL.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SUPREME DANDY

WHEN Brummell came of age, in 1779, he entered into possession of his patrimony, which, by the trustees' careful nursing during his minority, had increased to about thirty thousand pounds. This must have produced an income of over fifteen hundred a year, which, taking into consideration the far greater purchasing power of money in those days, may be regarded as an "elegant sufficiency" even for a modish bachelor. No sooner did Brummell doff his uniform than he rented No. 4, Chesterfield Street, opposite George Selwyn's house, and at once organised his *ménage* on very admirable, but withal not extravagant, lines. He then set up as the arbiter of fashion, and his claim seems even from the first to have been allowed.

He took up this position in a fortunate hour for himself. Dress had fallen into comparative

disregard, owing largely to the attitude of Fox, who, disgusted with his foppishness in Macaroni days, had since gone to the other extreme. The Prince of Wales's intimate friends, as it has already been stated, were the Barrymores, the Lades, Colonel Hanger, and "Jockey" of Norfolk, not one of whom was given to troubling about appearance; and though the Prince himself had done what he could by example to revive the early splendours of costume, his taste was too florid and too magnificent to appeal to the rising generation. Speaking generally, Wraxall's statement may be accepted that, "though gradually undermined, and insensibly perishing of an atrophy, dress never fell till the era of Jacobinism and of Equality, in 1793 and 1794. It was then that pantaloons, cropped hair, and shoe-strings, as well as the total abolition of buckles and ruffles, together with the disuse of hair-powder, characterised the men."

Some one was wanted in England who should combine elegance with neatness, and produce the best effects in the quietest ways. The hour was ripe for a master-mind, and, as usual, the man came forward to supply the demand: George Brummell stepped into his kingdom. It is an axiom that few, if any, important changes can be brought

about speedily except by some very drastic measure; and Brummell, realising this law of nature, to secure his sovereignty, revolutionised—the cravat. Hitherto, that indispensable article of attire had been worn limp and loose, a bandage to the neck rather than an ornament—"a towel tied under the chin," said a contemporary: Brummell appeared one day in St. James's Street with his cravat in elaborate but neat folds.

There was the greatest conceivable excitement in fashionable circles, and on all sides men inquired again and again, "How is it done? How is the muslin made to retain its place?" Every one had a suggestion to offer; but the secret was well kept, and it was not until the sensation had travelled to the limits of the town that Brummell whispered a word into a friend's ear—"starch!" It was a greater achievement than the invention of the new shoe-buckle with which the Prince of Wales had made his bow to the polite world; and from a patron this august personage became a friendly rival of Brummell.

We shall never know how many weeks or months were passed by Brummell practising in the privacy of his dressing-room to tie his cravat; but so intricate was the operation that, even when he was supposed to be proficient, his valet might

be seen any morning with many pieces of crumpled muslin over his arm, which he was not ashamed to explain were "our failures." There has been preserved an account by an eye-witness of the process. "The collar, which was always fixed to his shirt, was so large that, before being folded down, it completely hid his head and face, and the white neckcloth was at least a foot in height. The first *coup d'archet* was made with the shirt collar, which he folded down to its proper size; and Brummell, then standing before the glass, with his chin poked up to the ceiling, by the gentle and gradual declension of his lower jaw, creased the cravat to reasonable dimensions, the form of each succeeding crease being perfected with the shirt which he had just discarded."[1]

Yet surely the difficulties were worth overcoming, if there is any truth in a contemporary statement of the advantages to be derived from being thus adorned. "What an apparent superiority does not a starcher give to a man? It gives him a look of *hauteur* and greatness, which can scarcely be acquired otherwise. This is produced solely by the austere rigidity of the cravat, which so far, by any means, from yielding to the natural motions of the head, forms a strong sup-

[1] Quoted in Jesse: *Life of Brummell.*

port to the cheeks. It pushes them up, and gives a rotundity of appearance to the whole *figure*, thereby unquestionably giving a man the air of being puffed up with pride, vanity, and conceit (very necessary, nay, indispensable qualifications for a man of fashion), and appearing as quite towering over the rest of mankind, and holding his fellow-creatures covered with the deep disgrace of his disgust.

"I need only appeal to any common observer, to prove the veracity of the above assertions. Let any person take a stroll up and down some fashionable street of the Metropolis, at the proper time of day, and remark the men who do and who do not wear starchers. What a conscious sense of their own superiority in the former! What a full conviction of their own paltriness and insignificance in the latter!"[1]

Henceforth for many years the cravat was the most notable feature of the dandies' dress, and Luttrell whole-heartedly satirised it in his "Advice to Julia."

> "All is unprofitable, flat,
> And stale, without a smart *Cravat*,
> Muslined enough to hold its starch—
> That last keystone of Fashion's arch!

[1] *Neckclothitania.*

" ' Have you, my friend,' I've heard him say,
' Been lucky in your turns to-day ? ' [1]

. . . . . .

" ' The *turns* of your *Cravat*, I mean,
Tell me if *these* have lucky been ?
Have your attempts at once succeeded !
Or (while an hour has passed unheeded
And regretted) have you toiled
Till a week's laundry has been spoiled,
Ere round your neck, in every fold,
Exact, the muslin has been rolled,
And, dexterously in front confined,
Has kept the proper set behind ;
Not letting loose, nor pinning in
One jot too much of cheek or chin ?
In short, by dint of hand and eye,
Have you achieved a *perfect tie* ?—
These are *my* turns,—'twere idle pother
To waste a thought on any other.

" ' Should yours (kind Heaven, avert the omen !),
Like the cravats of vulgar, low men,
Asunder start—and, yawning wide,
Disclose a chasm on either side,
Letting, behind its checkered screen,
The secrets of your throat be seen ;
Or should it stubbornly persist
To take some awkward, tasteless twist,
Some crease indelible, and look
Just like a dunce's dog-eared book,

[1] This, Luttrell declared, was a question put by Brummell to a promising pupil.

How would you parry the disgrace ?
In what assembly show your face ?
How brook your rival's scornful glance,
Or partner's titter in the dance ?
How, in the morning, dare to meet
The quizzers of the park or street ?
Your occupation's gone—in vain
Hope to dine out or flirt again.
The ladies from their lists will put you,
And even *I*, my friend, must cut you.' "

The subject of the cravat inspired other writers, and a book appeared with the strange title, "Neckclothitania, or, Tietania: being an Essay on Starchers. By One of the Cloth." This volume, however, did not appear until 1818, by which time the ramifications of the cravat were innumerable. There were the Napoleon, American, Mail-Coach or Waterfall, Osbaldeston, Trône d'Amour, and Irish ties; the Mathematical tie, so called from its triangular form, and only one degree less severe than the dangerous Oriental tie, which was so high that the wearer, if he was tall, could not see where he was going, and so rigid that he could not turn his head.

"They've made him a dandy ;
A thing, you know, whisker'd, great-coated, and lac'd ;
Like an hour-glass, exceedingly small in the waist :

Quite a new sort of creature, unknown yet to scholars,
With heads so immovably struck in shirt collars,
That seats like our music-stools soon must be found them,
To twirl when the creatures wish to look round them." [1]

Brummell, of course, never affected these extremes of fashion, and never lost an opportunity to poke fun at those who did so.

"Is Lord Worcester here?" Brummell asked a waiter one night at dinner, when he was sitting next but one to that nobleman, who, encased in the Oriental tie, had not been able to look round.

"Yes, sir."

"Tell his lordship I shall be happy to drink a glass of wine with him."

"Yes, sir."

"Is his lordship ready?" came the question, after a brief interval.

"Yes, sir."

"Then tell him I drink his health," said the Beau, without turning his head.

Indeed, Brummell's taste was far too good to allow him to fall into this or any other error of exaggeration, and his dress was always marked by restraint and guided by good sense. While other and lesser dandies devoted their attention to one article, this one being noted for his boots

[1] Moore: *The Fudge Family in Paris.*

and that one for his coats, Brummell was careful to present a *tout-ensemble*, in which no one garment attracted undue attention.

" But my beautiful taste (as indeed you will guess)
Is manifest most in my toilet and dress.
My neckcloth, of course, forms my principal care,
For by that we criterions of elegance swear,
And costs me each morning some hours of flurry,
To make it appear to be tied in a hurry ;
My top-boots—those unerring marks of a blade—
With champagne are polished, and peach marmalade.
And a violet coat, closely copied from Byng,
And a cluster of seals and a large diamond ring ;
And *troisièmes* of buckskin, bewitchingly large,
Give the finishing strokes to the *parfait ouvrage*." [1]

It was Brummell's proud boast that he never attracted attention in the street, and that he could walk from his house to his club without being noticed.[2] " If John Bull turns round to look after you, you are not well-dressed ; but either too stiff, too tight, or too fashionable," he said to

[1] *Pursuits of Fashion.*

[2] " He was so finished a master of his craft that he could always elude notice between Chesterfield Street and White's. And he eluded notice because he fitted the landscape with delicate exactitude. In Regent Street his pantaloons might have cried aloud. They belonged to the scenery of Piccadilly."—Whibley : *The Pageantry of Life.*

" He was so well dressed that people turned to look at him," said some one to Brummell of a friend. " Then," said the Beau decisively, " he was *not* well dressed."

Hariette Wilson; who also noted in her memoirs that the dandy advocated the avoidance of perfumes, and the use of "very fine linen, plenty of it, and country washing." Brummell often met Hariette, and was one of the distinguished company that made overtures to the courtesan, though it is only right to say he was not serious and she took what she called "his nonsensical vows and professions" in the spirit in which they were made. "Beautiful Hariette," he wrote on one occasion, and she printed the note years later, "will you admit me into your house? Why so obstinately refuse my visits? Tell me, I do entreat you, when I may but throw myself at your feet, without fear of derision from a public homage on the pavement, or dislocation from the passing hackney coaches."

Simplicity was Brummell's creed, and all who met him for the first time were astonished by the studied, though elegant, plainness of his attire, which in the morning consisted of Hessians and pantaloons, or top-boots and buckskins, with a blue coat, and a light or buff-coloured waistcoat; in the evening, blue coat and white waistcoat, black pantaloons, made of stockinette, buttoning tight round the ankle, striped silk stockings, and opera hat. Only at Court, at the Opera, and at

Almack's were knee-breeches and *chapeau-bras* etiquette in the later years of Brummell's reign.

Though, as we know now, trousers had come to stay, much hostility was at first shown towards them. Taken from the military dress introduced into the army by the Duke of Wellington during the Peninsular war, and at first known as "Wellington trousers," they came into more or less general use at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the clergy and the fashionable world combined to oppose the innovation. An original trust deed, executed in 1820, of a Nonconformist chapel contains a clause providing that "under no circumstances shall a preacher be allowed to occupy the pulpit who wears trousers";[1] and, as we shall presently see, Almack's would not admit any one so attired; while the universities were as firm in their opposition, and in 1812 the authorities of Trinity and St. John's Colleges, Cambridge, decreed that students appearing in hall or chapel in pantaloons or trousers should be considered absent.[2]

Simplicity, then, was the key-note of Brummell's attire. Byron said there was nothing remarkable

[1] William Andrew: "The Early Hostility to Trousers" (*Chambers's Journal*, August 1907).

[2] Cooper: *Annals of Cambridge*.

in the Beau's style of dress except a certain exquisite propriety; and this point was emphasised by Lister in his now forgotten novel, "Granby," wherein Brummell is the prototype of Trebeck—the only pen-portrait in a work of fiction, the Beau said, that did not distort him out of all recognition. "Caroline had been rather misled by her mother's word 'dandy,' and expected to view in Trebeck an excess of all the peculiarities of that numerous but decreasing tribe. She saw, therefore, with surprise, that he wore a dress in no respect distinguishable from that of ten thousand others; that he had neither rings nor chains, that his head was not fixed at any particular angle, and that the quiet and almost careless tie of his cravat plainly showed that he had neither studied "Neckclothitania" nor believed in the axiom that 'Starch makes the man.'"

How accurate this picture is may be proved by the words of those of Brummell's contemporaries who wrote down their impressions. Lord William Pitt Lennox, to select one of his friends, declared that it was a libel to call Brummell a "dandy," since he differed entirely from all that species. "Of all my acquaintances, he was the quietest, plainest, and most unpretending dresser," he wrote. "Those who remember him in his palmy days

will bear testimony to the truth of this assertion; it was the total absence of all peculiarity, and a rigid adherence to the strictest rules of propriety in costume, which gained for him the homage due to his undisputed taste. He eschewed colours, trinkets, and gew-gaws; his clothes were exquisitely made, and, above all, adapted to his person; he put them on well too, but for all this there was no striving for effect—there was an unusual absence of study in his appearance." [1]

So quiet, as a matter of fact, was Brummell's habit that Moore must have been in ironical mood when he made the Beau take an interest in a garment of outrageous hue:

"Come to our *fête*, and show again
That pea-green coat, thou pink of men,
Which charmed all eyes that last surveyed it,
When Brummell's self enquired, 'Who made it?'"

Having established himself with the cravat as a leader of fashion, Brummell made further innovations. He raised the collar of the shirt, and added a frill to the front of that article of attire; and under his auspices trousers became tight pantaloons, and the full-dress evening costume knee-breeches and silk stockings; while he intro-

[1] *Celebrities I Have Known.*

duced into the hunting-field white-tops instead of the brown-tops then universally worn.[1] Also he countenanced the fashion of wearing the hair without powder; but powder, used by the upper classes after the abolition of wigs, had, indeed, been falling into disuse in private society, since Pitt imposed a tax upon it, and the Whigs, headed by the Duke of Bedford, decided to baulk the Minister of his expected revenue by abandoning it.[2] "Pitt's tax upon hair-powder, which was imposed in 1795, had a considerable effect. It contained, indeed, a long and curious list of exemptions, which shows how completely the use of hair-powder was then looked upon as a social necessity. In addition to the Royal Family and their servants, clergymen not possessing a hundred

[1] "During his life Brummell saw the old-fashioned full frock-coat, bagwig, solitaire, and ruffles die away: he saw the decline and fall of knee-breeches for common wear, and the pantaloons invented by himself take their place. From these pantaloons reaching to the ankle came the trousers, as fashionable garments, open over the instep at first, and joined by loops and buttons, then strapped under the boot, and after that in every manner of cut to the present style. He saw the three-cornered hat vanish from the hat-boxes of the polite world, and he saw fine-coloured clothes give way to blue coats with brass buttons or coats of solemn black."—Dion Clayton Calthrop: *English Costume*, vol. iv.

[2] In September 1795 some of the Whig leaders—the Duke of Bedford, the Marquis of Anglesea, the Earl of Jersey, Lord William Russell, and others—met in solemn conclave at Woburn Abbey, and there sorrowfully cut off their queues.

a year, subalterns in the army, and officers in the navy under the rank of masters and commanders were exempted, and in families all daughters but the two eldest." [1] The tax was one guinea a head, and Pitt optimistically anticipated a revenue of two hundred and ten thousand pounds; but the receipts were but a fraction of this sum, for even many of those who continued to use hair-powder contrived by one device or another to evade the unpopular tax, and in 1812 there were only forty-six thousand "guinea-pigs," as they were called.

Brummell, from the day of his appearance in the starched cravat, was not only the arbiter, but also the despot, of fashion; and he could, with a look, make or mar the reputation of a would-be elegant, while a word of approval from him was worth a small fortune to a tradesman. At first he patronised the famous Cork Street tailors, Schweitzer and Davidson, and also Meyer, of Conduit Street, who invented, or carried out Brummell's suggestion of, the trouser which opened at the bottom of the leg and was closed by buttons and loops. Later he transferred his patronage to Weston, in Old Bond Street, who must then have been in a small way of business, for George Elers in 1796 admitted he was dis-

[1] Lecky: *History of England in the Eighteenth Century.*

comfited when he had to say that Weston was his tailor;[1] but with Brummell for his customer, Weston's rise was rapid, and in 1816 he was noted for the best cut for the long-tailed and short-waisted coat, which for morning and evening dress alike was generally blue.

"That fellow Weston," said the great man, "is an inimitable fellow—a little defective perhaps in his 'linings,' but irreproachable for principle and button-holes. He came to London, Sir, without a shilling, and he controls more realised thousands than our fat friend does 'frogs' on his Brandenburg. He is not only rich, but brave; not only brave, but courteous; not only courteous, but candid. The other day he was coming up from some d——d place on the coast by that thing, the—the—stage-coach. There were two women in the coach, two deucedly pretty women, and an over-dressed fellow, who was, of course, an ass; and who was so over-civil to the prettier of the two, that the persecuted creature appealed to quiet little Weston for protection. Weston, Sir, talked to the fellow with an *aplomb* that would have done honour to either of my friends, the Lord Primate or the Lord Chancellor. The brute —not the tailor, but the 'gentleman'—was deaf

[1] George Elers: *Memoirs*, 1777–1842.

to remonstrance, and ruder than ever. Thereupon Weston, without losing his self-possession, stopped the coach, dragged the astonished fellow out, explained to the outside passengers the state of the case, and found his challenge to fight received with acclamation by everybody but his designated opponent. He compelled his unwilling adversary, however, to stand upon the defensive, and a most terrible thrashing he gave him. But his *coup de grâce*, Sir, was the most finishing thing I ever heard of. Weston, Sir, picked him up from the ground, held him at arm's length, and in a cruel loud voice exclaimed to him, 'Now, Sir, it may be a pleasure to you and to your friends, to know that you have not only been well licked, but you have been licked by a tailor!'" After an impressive pause the Beau would add, "From this time forth, I shall religiously pay my tailors' bills! The act of Weston has heroified the profession!"

Stulze was not in Brummell's day regarded as being at the top of the tree, and, according to Lytton, the Beau had not the highest opinion of him. "Stulze aims at making *gentlemen*, not *coats*; there is a degree of aristocratic pretension in his stitches which is vulgar to an appalling degree," says Russelton in "Pelham." "You can tell a Stulze coat anywhere, which is quite enough

to damn it: the moment a man's known by an invariable cut, and that not original, it ought to be all over with him. Give me the man who makes the tailor, not the tailor who makes the man." Stulze, however, deserved to get on, and in the long run he did succeed by virtue of his enterprise. When customers would not, or did not, come to him at Clifford Street, he would go to them. The story is told that at Wellington's quarters at the Château of Mont St. Martin, near Cambray, a very neatly appointed travelling britska drove up in great haste to the principal entrance, and a small, stout, intelligent-looking man descended, and demanded to see the Duke. There was much speculation among the *aides-de-camp* and others in the ante-room as to the identity of the distinguished visitor, and the general opinion inclined to the belief that he must be a foreign messenger of importance, when a servant appeared upon the scene and put an end to all speculation by announcing that his Grace would see Mr. Stulze in a few minutes. Stulze made a fortune, and devoted much of it to charitable purposes for the benefit of his countrymen; he built and endowed a hospital at Baden, in consideration of which good deed the Grand Duke created him a baron.

It has been said by a witty Frenchman that tradesmen would far rather have displayed the sign "By Appointment to George Brummell" than the royal arms and "By Appointment to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales," and there can be no doubt that the Beau's influence upon fashion was paramount. There was at this time, however, considerable intimacy between the rival leaders, and the Prince would frequently come to Chesterfield Street in the morning, to discuss some proposed novelty in costume, and was often so engrossed in the subject that he would remain to dinner. Yet even he admitted his host's superiority, and, if in after years his Royal Highness spoke of the Beau as a "tailor's dummy," there can be no doubt that the words were uttered in malice and all uncharitableness.

CHAPTER IX

ARBITER ELEGANTIARUM (1798–1816)

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THE belief is generally held that Brummell was merely a well-dressed man who, by virtue of the correctness of his attire upon all occasions, was accepted as the leader of fashionable society for nearly a score of years. To take this view, however, is not to do justice to the Beau, for, while it is certainly true that he first drew attention to himself by his immaculate appearance and his daring innovations in costume, it must not be overlooked that, having once been recognised as *Arbiter Elegantiarum*, he brought other qualities into play to support his position.

"There are many roads to notoriety," Lister has remarked in his character-sketch of Brummell, which that worthy himself pronounced life-like. "Trebeck began with dress, but he soon relinquished that as unworthy or untenable. He scorned to share his fame with his tailor, and

was, moreover, seriously disgusted at seeing a well-fancied waistcoat, almost unique, before the expiration of its 'honey-moon,' adorning the person of a natty apprentice. He sickened soon of giving names to cloaks, hats, buggies, and pantaloons, and panted for a higher pedestal than a coach-maker's show-room or a tailor's shop-board. His coats and carriages were copied by others almost as soon as they were exhibited by him; and as it was his ambition to be inimitable, he found it much better to shun these outward peculiarities, and trust alone to the 'nameless grace of polished ease,' which he really possessed in a remarkable degree.

"He had great powers of entertainment, and a keen and lively turn for satire; and could talk down his superiors, whether in rank or talent, with very imposing confidence. He saw the advantages of being formidable, and observed with derision how those whose malignity he pampered with ridicule of others, vainly thought to purchase, by subserviency, exemption for themselves. He had sounded the gullibility of the world; knew the precise current value of pretension, and soon found himself the acknowledged umpire, the last appeal, of many contented followers.

"He seldom committed himself by praise or

recommendation, but rather left his example and adoption to work its way. As for censure he had both ample and witty store; but here too he often husbanded his remarks, and where it was needless or dangerous to define a fault, could check admiration by an incredulous smile, and depress pretensions of a season's standing by the raising of an eyebrow. He had a quick perception of the foibles of others, and a keen relish for bantering and exposing them. No keeper of a menagerie could better show off a monkey than he could an 'original.' He could ingeniously cause the unconscious subject to place his own absurdities in the best point of view, and would cloak his derision under the blandest cajolery. . . .

"In the art of cutting he shone unrivalled: he knew the 'when,' the 'where,' and the 'how.' Without affecting useless short-sightedness, he could assume that calm but wandering gaze, which veers, as if unconsciously, round the prescribed individual; neither fixing, nor to be fixed; not looking on vacancy, nor on any one object; neither occupied, nor abstracted; a look which perhaps excuses you to the person *cut*, and, at any rate, prevents him from accosting you.

"Originality was his idol. He wished to astonish, even if he did not amuse; and had

rather say a silly thing than a commonplace one. He was led by this sometimes even to approach the verge of rudeness and vulgarity; but he had considerable tact, and a happy hardihood, which generally carried him through the difficulties into which his fearless love of originality brought him. Indeed, he well knew that what would in the present condition of his reputation be scouted in anybody else, would pass current with the world in him."[1]

Lister, in this description, shows that he possessed an insight into Brummell's character that has not been the portion of any of the great man's biographers, with, of course, the notable exception of M. Barbey D'Aurevilly, the supreme apostle of dandyism. It is, indeed, true that the Beau had a soul above clothes, and, if he was careful to devote much attention to his attire, it was but the first step in a career dictated by an ambition that urged him to leadership. So at a later day did Benjamin Disraeli first attract notice, and perhaps it would not be difficult to find points of resemblance in the characters, as distinguished from the talents, of these men. Brummell could no more remain a mere dandy than Disraeli a cypher in the House

[1] *Granby: A Novel.*

of Commons; both were born leaders of men, and if the one was content to govern society and the other could be satisfied with nothing less than the control of the destinies of his country, the impulse that urged them was not dissimilar. Both, though, of course, in vastly different degrees, had wit and a supreme contempt for most of those who surrounded them; and, above all, each had a charm of manner that compelled his companions to overlook his raillery and to forgive his insolence.

Disraeli, writing home from Gibraltar in 1830, speaks with pride of his reputation as a *beau* and of the admiration and envy of the subalterns, and he adds that he has also the fame of being the first who ever passed the Straits with two canes, a morning and an evening cane. "I change my cane as the gun fires," he wrote. "It is wonderful the effect these magical wands produce. I owe to them even more attention than to being the supposed author of—what is it?—I forget!"[1] This shows the true dandiacal spirit, and it is only natural that Disraeli, introducing Brummell into "Vivian Grey" as Emilius von Aslingen, should treat him with kindness, for no one knew better than that what is

[1] *Lord Beaconsfield's Letters*, 1830–1832 (edition 1887, p. 9).

one man's food is another man's poison, and that a Disraeli and a Brummell dare do what others would be mad to attempt. "Imitators Brummell loved much, but to baffle them more," Lister has written. "He loved to turn upon the luckless adopters of his last folly, and see them precipitately back out of the scrape into which himself had led them."[1] Whatever he did found many imitators, and when on one occasion he gave it out that curds and whey was a very wholesome dish for breakfast, all society made it the staple dish at that meal.[2] It was this weakness that Disraeli thought worthy to hold up to ridicule.

"All these exquisites wore white hats lined with crimson, in consequence of the head of the all-influential Emilius von Aslingen having, on the previous day, been kept sacred from the profaning air by that most tasteful covering," he wrote. "The young lords were loud in their commendations of this latest evidence of Von Aslingen's happy genius, and rallied, with a most unmerciful spirit, the unfortunate Von Bernstorff for not having yet mounted the all-perfect *chapeau*. Like all Von Aslingen's

[1] *Granby: A Novel.*

[2] Major Chambre: *Recollections of West-End Life.*

introductions, it was as remarkable for good taste as for striking singularity: they had no doubt it would have a great run; exactly the style of thing for a hot autumn, and it suited so admirably with the claret-coloured riding coat, which Madame considered Von Aslingen's *chef-d'œuvre*. Inimitable Von Aslingen! As they were in raptures, to Vivian's great delight, and to their great dismay, the object of their admiration appeared. Our hero was, of course, anxious to see so interesting a character; but he could scarcely believe that he, in fact, beheld the ingenious introducer of white-and-crimson hats, and the still happier inventor of those *chefs-d'œuvre*, claret-coloured riding-coats, when his attention was directed to a horseman who wore a peculiarly high, heavy black hat, and a frogged and furred frock, buttoned up, although it was a most sultry day, to his very nose. How singular is the slavery of fashion! Notwithstanding their mortification, the unexpected costume of Von Aslingen appeared only to increase the young lords' admiration of his character and accomplishments; and instead of feeling that he was an insolent pretender, whose fame originated in his insulting their tastes, and existed only by their sufferance, all cantered away with the determina-

tion of wearing on the next day, even if it were to cost them each a calenture, furs enough to keep each man warm during a winter party at St. Petersburg."[1]

"Brummell was no fool," said an observer no less acute than Lady Hester Stanhope, to whom, indeed, Brummell deliberately explained his *pose* —for *pose* it was rather than vanity, as may be seen clearly enough from a conversation between him and Lady Hester, whom he accosted one day in Bond Street with the question:

"Dear creature! who is that man you were talking to just now?"

"Why," she answered, "that is Colonel ——."

"Colonel what?" said he, in his peculiar manner. "Who ever heard of his father?"

"And who ever heard of George Brummell's father?" Lady Hester retorted.

"Ah! Lady Hester," he rejoined half-seriously, "who, indeed, ever heard of George Brummell's father, and who would ever have heard of George Brummell himself, if he had been anything but what he is? But you know, my dear Lady Hester, it is my folly that is the making of me. If I did not impertinently stare Duchesses out of countenance, and nod over my shoulder to a Prince, I should

[1] *Vivian Grey*, book vii. chapter iv.

be forgotten in a week: and, if the world is so silly as to admire my absurdities, you and I may know better, but what does that signify?"[1]

For the sake of comparison with Lister's Trebeck, here may be given the less kindly, but not altogether untruthful portrait of Brummell as Russelton in Lytton's "Pelham." "I gave myself, without restraint, to the ambition that burnt within me: I cut my old friends, who were rather envious than emulous of my genius, and I employed three tradesmen to make my gloves —one for the hand, a second for the fingers, and a *third for the thumb*. These two new qualities made me courted and admired by a new race; for the great secrets of being courted are, to shun others and seem delighted with yourself. The latter is obvious enough: who the deuce *should* be pleased with you, if you yourself are not? . . . Before I commenced a part which was to continue through life, I considered deeply on the humours of the spectators. I saw that the character of the English was servile to rank, and yielding to pretension—they admire you for your acquaintance, and cringe to you for your conceit. The first thing, therefore, was to know great people, the second to control them. I

[1] Lady Hester Stanhope: *Memoirs*.

dressed well, and had good horses—that was sufficient to make me sought by the young of my own sex. I talked scandal, and was never abashed—that was more than enough to make me *recherché* among the matrons of the other. It is single men and married women to whom are given the St. Peter's keys of society. I was soon admitted into its heaven—I was more, I was one of its saints. I became imitated, as well as initiated. I was the rage—the lion. Why? Was I better? was I richer? was I handsomer? was I cleverer than my kind? No, no. And had I been all—had I been a very concentration and monopoly of all human perfections, they would not have valued me at half the price they *did* set on me. It was because *I trampled on them*, that, like crushed herbs, they sent up a grateful incense in return."

"Pelham" also contains a set of maxims for costume, at once witty and pithy, that certainly seems to have been suggested by Brummell's rules for his own attire, and which consequently are deserving of insertion here.

I

Do not require your dress so much to fit as to adorn you. Nature is not to be copied, but to be exalted by art. Apelles blamed Protogenes for being *too* natural.

II

Never, in your dress, altogether desert that taste which is general. The world considers eccentricity in great things genius ; in small things, folly.

III

Always remember that you dress to fascinate others, not yourself.

IV

Keep your mind free from all violent affections at the hour of the toilet. A philosophical serenity is perfectly necessary to success. Helvetius says, justly, that our errors arise from our passions.

V

Remember that none but those whose courage is unquestionable can venture to be effeminate. It was only in the field that the Lacedemonians were accustomed to use perfumes and curl their hair.

VI

Never let the finery of chains and rings seem *your own* choice ; that which naturally belongs to women should appear only worn for their sake. We dignify foppery when we invest it with a sentiment.

VII

To *win* the affection of your mistress, appear negligent in your costume ; to *preserve* it, assiduous. The first is a sign of the *passion* of love ; the second, of its *respect.*

VIII

A man must be a profound calculator to be a consummate dresser. One must not dress the same whether one goes to a minister or to a mistress, an avaricious uncle or an ostentatious cousin; there is no diplomacy more subtle than that of dress.

IX

Is the great man whom you would conciliate a coxcomb?—go to him in a waistcoat like his own. "Imitation," says the author of "Lacon," "is the sincerest flattery."

X

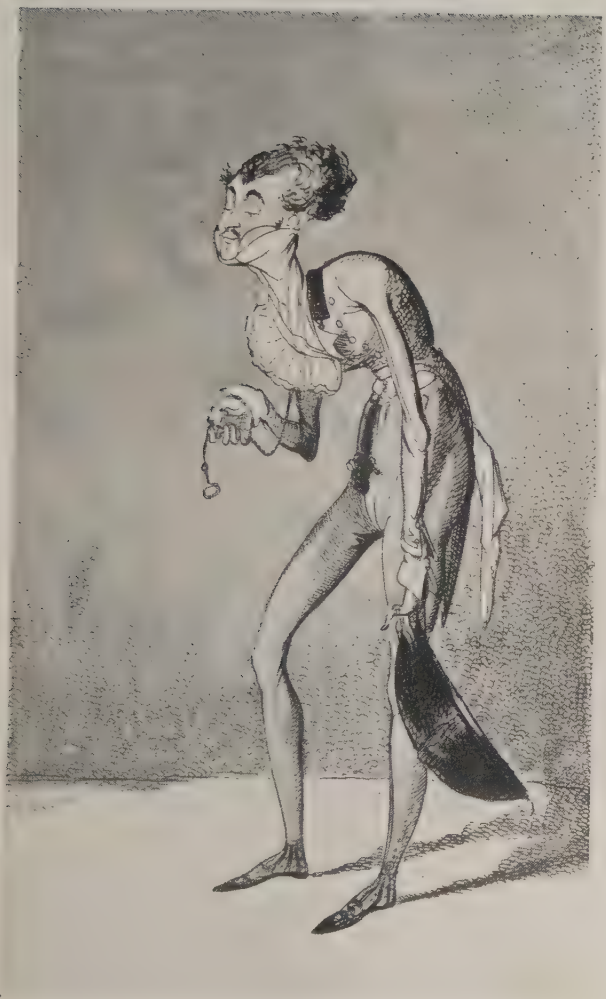
The handsome may be showy in dress; the plain should study to be unexceptionable: just as in great men we look for something to admire, in ordinary men we ask for nothing to forgive.

XI

There is a study of dress for the aged as well as for the young. Inattention is no less indecorous in one than in the other. We may distinguish the taste appropriate to each by the reflection that youth is made to be loved, age to be respected.

XII

A fool may dress gaudily, but a fool cannot dress well—for to dress well requires judgment; and Rochefaucauld says with truth, "*On est quelquefois un sot avec de l'esprit, mais on ne l'est jamais avec du jugement.*"



From an etching by George Cruikshank.

THE EXQUISITE.

XIII

There may be more pathos in the fall of a collar, or the curl of a lock, than the shallow think for. Should we be so apt as we are now to compassionate the misfortunes, and to forgive the insincerity of Charles I., if his pictures had pourtrayed him in a bob-wig and a pigtail? Vandyke was a greater sophist than Hume.

XIV

The most graceful principle of dress is neatness—the most vulgar is preciseness.

XV

Dress contains the two codes of morality—private and public. Attention is the duty we owe to others—cleanliness that which we owe to ourselves.

XVI

Dress so that it may never be said of you, "What a well-dressed man!"—but, "What a gentleman-like man!"

XVII

Avoid many colours; and seek, by some one prevalent and quiet tint, to sober down the others. Apelles used only four colours, and always subdued those which were more florid by a darkening varnish.

XVIII

Nothing is superficial to a deep observer! It is in trifles that the mind betrays itself. "In what part of that letter," said a king to the wisest of living diplomatists, "did you discover irresolution?"—"In its *n's* and *g's*!" was the answer.

XIX

A very benevolent man will never shock the feelings of others by an excess either of inattention or display ; you may doubt, therefore, the philanthropy both of a sloven and a fop.

XX

There is an indifference to please in a stocking down at heel ; but there may be malevolence in a diamond ring.

XXI

Inventions in dressing should resemble Addison's definition of fine writing, and consist of " refinements which are natural, without being obvious."

XXII

He who esteems trifles for themselves is a trifler ; he who esteems them for the conclusions to be drawn from them, or for the advantage to which they can be put, is a philosopher.

If this last maxim is acceptable, there can be no question but that Brummell was a philosopher, for his whole bearing and conversation was carefully built up with the specific design to attract attention. His affectations, like many actors' mannerisms, were deliberate ; and the curious thing is that the fashionable world came to admire his absurdities ; indeed, it was his affectations and his unbridled insolence that made him the rage. At first, when he was making sure

of his audience, however, he limited his impertinences to matters of dress.

When some one said to him at White's, "Brummell, your brother William is in town; isn't he coming here?" "Yes, in a day or two," came the astonishing reply; "but I have recommended him to walk the back streets till his new clothes come home."

Walking one day with a peer down St. James's Street, he chanced to look on the pavement, whereupon he stopped. "What do you call those things on your feet?" he asked abruptly. His companion stared as he replied, "Why, shoes, of course." "Shoes, are they?" said the Beau doubtfully, stooping to look at them; "I thought they were slippers."

The Duke of Bedford once asked his opinion of a new coat. Brummell looked at it carefully in front, and then, when the wearer had turned round, at the back. Having completed his survey, "Bedford," he asked earnestly, "did I hear you call this thing *a coat*?"[1]

Poking fun at those whose costume was not all that could be desired was an amusement of which Brummell never tired. Again and again, with only some trifling variation, he re-

[1] Lytton introduced this jest into *Pelham*.

peated the jest. Grantley Berkeley has related how a young sporting friend of his called on the Beau, and was shown into the drawing-room where the *élite* of the dandy circle were assembled. After the formal introductions, the visitor turned to look at some rare china on a table, from which occupation he was presently aroused by an exclamation of surprise from his host, and, looking towards him, the young man had the satisfaction to perceive that the company was intently observing him through their eye-glasses, and that Brummell was looking at him with an expression of mingled concern and amazement.

"My dear fellow," the latter exclaimed, advancing nearer him, with his glass to his eye, the others following his example, "aw, where did you pick up that extraordinary affair you have put on your back? I protest I never saw anything so singular."

"Most singular indeed," cried Lord Yarmouth.

"Maybe it's an heirloom?" suggested Lord Fife.

"Coeval with Alfred the Great, at least," observed Lord Alvanley.

"Exactly!" said Lord Wilton.

"Exactly!" echoed another.

Prince Esterhazy laughed good-humouredly, as

he added, "It is not your fault, mine goot sir. You shall not be to blame, because a devoid-of-conscience-influencing tradesman deceives you when you do him the honour to purchase of him his delusive fabrics."

"Is there anything the matter with the coat?" the visitor inquired in a dreadful state of confusion.

"Coat!" exclaimed Beau Brummell.

"Coat!" cried his friends in chorus, all in extreme astonishment.

"For Heaven's sake, sir, don't misapply names so abominably!" cried the host himself, and every one continued to scrutinise the garment. "It's no more like a coat than it's like a cauliflower—if it is, I'll be d—d!"

Gradually, when Brummell found that his contemptuous attitude towards men and things was not only endured, but appreciated and imitated, he enlarged his scope.

"In Heaven's name, my dear Duchess," he said at a grand ball to her Grace of Rutland, "what is the meaning of that extraordinary back of yours? I declare I must put you on a backboard. You must positively walk out of the room backwards that I mayn't see it."

Even Lady Hester Stanhope was not entirely

safe from him, for one evening he marched up to her, who was remarkable for the fine turn of her neck and the set of her head upon her neck, and coolly took out her earrings, telling her she should not wear such things—meaning that they hid the best part of her.

No man could rout a bore so thoroughly as Brummell, and when one day such a person had been talking to him drearily and at great length about the lakes, and concluded by asking him which lake he thought the most beautiful, before replying, he, much to his guest's astonishment, called his valet.

"Robinson!"

"Sir!"

"Which of the lakes do I admire?"

"Windermere, sir."

"Ah, yes, Windermere, so it is. Thank you, Robinson." Then, turning to the bore, he said, "Yes, I like Windermere best."

Brummell has been blamed for his insolence, but to his credit it must be stated that he was impertinent only to his social equals and superiors, who, instead of resenting it, as they might easily have done by the very drastic method of shutting their doors against him, tolerated it for the sake of the distinction of being seen with the arbiter

of fashion. If they chose to put up with it, it is not for the present generation to resent it. It was not Brummell who was the snob, but his acquaintances; as it was not he who toadied to the great folk, but the great folk who were happy if he would only notice their existence. No man was ever less patronised, for he patronised those who might have been his patrons.

When Brummell was invited by a great merchant to dinner, he replied, "With pleasure, if you will promise faithfully not to tell any one." The invitation was not withdrawn. It was not in good taste to ask for "some more of that cider" at a house where the champagne was of an inferior quality; yet after this the host again and again invited, even entreated, the Beau to dine with him.

It is only fair to the great man's memory to state that he was not guilty of all the impertinences attributed to him, and he always denied the truth of the following incident, though it was quite in his vein of insolent humour. A *nouveau riche* invited him to dinner, and asked him to name his own party—so the story runs. He named Alvanley, Pierrepoint, Mildmay, and others, to the number, including himself, of eleven. Then he paused, and his host said:

"That will just make an even number."

"An *even* number?" Brummell said in surprise, for he had counted the names on his fingers. "How's that?"

The other read over the names. "Your friends ten, yourself, and myself—twelve in all."

"Good Gad, sir!" the Beau is said to have exclaimed in horror, "you surely don't mean *you* are to be one of the party!"

Of course, Brummell sometimes overstepped the mark. It was not amusing to awaken a gentleman in the middle of the night with the inquiry, "Pray, sir, is your name Snodgrass?" and on being assured that this was so, remark reflectively as he walked away, "Snodgrass! Snodgrass!—a very odd name that, upon my soul, a very odd name, indeed!" Nor was it good fooling to affect confusion of identity between an unfashionable Mrs. Thompson and a fashionable Mrs. Johnson.

There was no excuse for his going to a party to which he had not been invited, as he did when a great law-lord, who lived in Russell Square, gave a ball at which a young society beauty, to whom the Beau, then a young Hussar, was paying his court. Brummell danced most of the evening with her, but during one of the intervals he found himself standing close by an acquaintance.

"Ha! you here?" he cried. "Do, my dear fellow, tell me who that ugly man is leaning against the chimney-piece?"

"Why," said the other in astonishment, "surely you must know him. He is the master of the house!"

"No, indeed; how should I?" remarked the Beau simply. "I never was invited."

In spite of such lapses, however, Brummell could be, and often was, genuinely witty. "He is a fellow, now, that would send his plate up twice for soup," was his admirably contemptuous definition of a certain type of man; and his reply when asked how he had caught cold might be a line in an Oscar Wilde comedy: "The scoundrelly landlord put me in a room with a damp stranger."

Brummell has been unfortunate in his biographers, for, with the exception of M. Barbey d'Aurevilly and Mr. Charles Whibley, those who have written about him have taken him *au grand sérieux*. They have not been able to enter into the spirit of his humour. When they read that Brummell, paying a visit to his old regiment at Canterbury in a carriage with four horses, was asked, "Halloo, George! when did you take to four horses?" they see only a monstrous affecta-

tion in his reply, "Only since my valet gave me warning for making him travel with a pair." When they are told that, *à propos* of a young man about to enter society who had been recommended to his good graces, he remarked with great gravity, "Really I did my best for the young man. I once gave him my arm from White's to Watier's"—about a hundred yards—they speak of his conceit![1] And they reprove him for extravagance because he replied to a lady who inquired what allowance she should make her son, who was about to enter the world, that, *with economy*, the lad should be able to dress on eight hundred a year! The fact is that Brummell was a magnificent *poseur*, and was never so happy as when amusing himself at the expense of the fools and the fops.

Occasionally, however, the Beau met his match. A lady asked him to "take a cup of tea," to which he replied, "Thank you, ma'am; I never *take* anything but physic." "I beg your pardon," came the crushing retort, delivered in icy tones, "you also take liberties!"

[1] Another and not dissimilar story is told of Brummell, who had borrowed five hundred pounds from a man who, after a time, pressed him for payment.

"I paid you," said the Beau calmly.

"Paid me! When, pray?"

"Why, when I was standing at the window at White's, and said as you passed, 'How d'ye do, Jemmy?'"

There is another instance when Brummell was not the victor in a conversational joust, though his fall was not a disgrace, since his antagonist was no less a wit than the author of "The School for Scandal." Sheridan saw Brummell one day at Charing Cross, and, noticing that the Beau seemed desirous to avoid him, he, as a matter of course, accosted him. "Ah, Brummell, my fine fellow, where have you been at this time of day?"

"Sherry, my dear boy, don't men-tion that you saw me in this fil-thy part of the town; but perhaps I am rather *se-vere*, for his Grace of Northum-ber-land re-sides some-where about this spot, if I don't mis-take" (the conversation is interesting as an example of Brummell's manner of speaking). "The fact is, my dear boy, I have been in the d-a-mn'd c-i-t-y—to the Bank: I wish they would remove it to the west end, for re-al-ly it is quite a bore to go to such a place; more par-ti-cu-lar-ly as one cannot be seen in one's own e-qui-page beyond Somer-set House, and the hackney-coaches are not fit for a chimney-sweep to ride in. Yes, my dear Sherry, you may note the cir-cum-stance down in your mem-or-and-um book as a very re-mark-able one, that on the twen-ti-eth day of March in the year of our Lord,

eighteen hundred and three, you des-cried me, travel-ling from the east end of the town like a common ci-ti-zen who has left his counting-house for the day, in order to dine with his upstart wife and daughters at their vul-gar re-si-dence in Bruns-wick Square."

"Nay, my good fellow! travelling from the East!—after all, that is surely impossible; you must be joking."

"Why, my dear boy?—why?"

"Because the *wise* men came from the East."

"So, then, sar, you think *me* a fool, do you?"

"By no means, but I *know* you to be one."

"I tell you what, my friend Sherry, I shall *cut* you for this im-per-ti-nence, depend on't. I mean to-night, at the op-e-ra, to send the Prince to Co-ven-try for the next twelve months, and you shall ac-com-pany him."[1]

Since "Sherry" and the Beau were on good terms, it seems improbable that the last part of the conversation has been accurately reported; but if they did fight with the buttons off, Brummell's threat was not so ridiculous, as presently it will be shown.

In his day Brummell was undoubtedly the first

[1] Charles Marsh: *The Clubs of London*, 1832.

personage in English society, and there is no greater tribute to his charm of manner than the fact that he, who was a newcomer in such circles, should have been on friendly terms with those who, from their position, might have been, but for his usurpation, leaders of the fashionable world. The Prince of Wales, the Dukes of Devonshire, Bedford, Rutland, and Beaufort, the Earls of Chatham and Jersey, Lord Byron, Lord Alvanley, Lord Willoughby d'Evesby, Lord Frederick Bentinck, Lords Robert and Charles Manners, as well as Sir Henry Mildmay, Sir Henry Watkin Williams Wynn, Lord Robert Spencer, Richard Fitzpatrick, Henry Pierrepoint, and a host of others, accepted his supremacy without demur, and became his loyal henchmen. His acquaintance was sought, his approval courted, by all, with the sole exception of Harriet, Lady Granville, who wrote from Texal in 1812, "Mr. Brummell *se fait plutôt attendre que désirer.* I feel it a matter of perfect indifference whether he arrives at any moment or not at all." And even she recanted later. He was much in request at the great country houses; and was a frequent visitor at Woburn, at Chatsworth, at Belvoir, and elsewhere. He was certainly not popular with men because of any love of sport, for, though he rode

and shot, he cared little for either amusement; nor was his popularity with women owing to his looks, for we have it on the authority of Harriette Wilson—no mean judge of men's appearance, it is fair to assume—that while the expression of his countenance was far from disagreeable, "no one could have mistaken him for anything like handsome," especially after he had broken the bridge of his nose, which accident, by the way, he told another prominent member of the *demi-monde*, had cost him a lady and her fortune of twenty thousand pounds.[1] Even Captain Jesse's pen-portrait of his hero does not convey any idea of a handsome man. "His face was rather long and complexion fair; his whiskers inclined to sandy and hair light brown. His features were neither plain nor handsome, but his head was well shaped, the forehead being unusually high; showing, according to phrenological development, more of the mental than the animal passions—the bump of self-esteem was very prominent. His countenance indicated that he possessed considerable intelligence, and his mouth betrayed a strong disposition to indulge in sarcastic humour; this was predominant in every feature, the nose excepted, the natural regularity of which, though

[1] Harriette Wilson: *Memoirs.*

it had been broken by a fall from his charger, preserved his countenance from degenerating into comicality. His eyebrows were equally expressive with his mouth, and while the latter was giving utterance to something very good-humoured or polite, the former, and the eyes themselves, which were grey and full of oddity, could assume an expression that made the sincerity of his words very doubtful." [1]

Brummell was, however, an agreeable companion, with great conversational powers, and a light, bantering humour; while his cool self-possession and his pleasing voice perhaps had as much to do with his attractiveness in women's eyes as his position in society, though she was happy in whose opera-box or at whose assembly he would pass an hour; for, even when he had fled to Calais, he was still found attractive and had many admirers, including Madame la Baronne de Borno, the wife of a Russian officer then in England. "Approving and inviting are her frequent smiles as she looks into my window from the garden-walk," he confided to Raikes, "but I have

[1] *Life of Beau Brummell.*

Perhaps if the Beau had thought that Jesse would be his biographer, he would not one day have addressed him: "My dear Jesse, excuse me, but you look very much like a magpie!"

neither spirits nor inclination to improve such flattering overtures."

"*Il fut un sultan sans mouchoir*," Barbey d'Aurevilly said of him; and while he was no Joseph, he was not a man of intrigues, and his love affairs were neither deep nor enduring. He was, indeed, in a position as difficult as that of the famous Beau Austin, of whom Miss Foster said to her niece, "The attentions of a man like Mr. Austin, child, are not supposed to lead to matrimony. He is a feature of society: an ornament: a personage: a private gentleman by birth, but a kind of king by habit and reputation. What woman could he marry? Those to whom he might properly aspire are all too far beneath him. I have known George Austin too long, child, and I understand that the very greatness of his success condemns him to remain unmarried."[1] Yet once at least Brummell did wish to marry, and the affair went so far that he made preparations for an elopement; but the scheme was discovered by the girl's relatives and promptly frustrated, and he only saved himself from ridicule by replying to his friends who twitted him with the failure of his design, "Why, what could I do, my good fellow, but cut the connection? I

[1] Stevenson and Henley: *Beau Austin*: *A Drama.*

discovered that Lady Mary actually ate cabbage" —presumedly a serious offence in the eyes of one who, when asked if he liked vegetables, answered, "I once ate a pea!"

As a rule, however, Brummell did not take himself seriously as a lover; and it is difficult to believe he was very much in earnest when the following conversation took place:

"I must leave here this morning," he said one day, when staying at a country house, to his host.

"Why, you were not to go until next month," replied the other in astonishment.

"True, true! but I must be off."

"But what for?" persisted his entertainer, scenting mystery.

"Why, the fact is," blurted out the Beau, "I am in love with your Countess."

"Why, my dear fellow, so was I twenty years ago," replied the Countess's husband, so that Brummell should not feel overwhelmed by his folly. Then a thought struck him, and he asked:

"Is she in love with you?"

"I," stammered the guest—"I believe she is."

"That alters the case!" said the host decidedly. "I will send for your post-horses immediately."

That the Beau flirted with many women at

different times there can be no doubt, and certainly he had the gift of writing amusing, mock-loving letters, in which an airy *badinage* is not the least agreeable quality.

"My Dear Lady Jane,

"With the miniature I am not to be trusted, even for two pitiful hours; my own memory must be, then, my only disconsolate expedient to obtain a resemblance.

"As I am unwilling to merit the imputation of committing myself, by too flagrant a liberty, in retaining your glove, which you charitably sent at my head yesterday, as you would have extended an eleemosynary sixpence to the supplicating hat of a mendicant, I restore it to you; and allow me to assure you I have too much regard and respect for you, and too little practical vanity myself (whatever appearances may be against me), to have entertained, for one treacherous instant, the impertinent intention to defraud you of it. You are angry, perhaps irreparably incensed against me, for this petty larceny. I have no defence to offer in mitigation, but that of frenzy. But we know you are an angel visiting these sublunary spheres, and therefore your first quality should be that of mercy; yet you are sometimes wayward and volatile in your seraphic disposition; though you have no wings, still you have weapons; and these are resentment and estrangement from me. With sentiments of the deepest compunction,

"I am always,

"Your miserable slave,

"George Brummell."

This, certainly, is not the letter of an ardent lover, and it was probably as obvious to the lady as to us that he was merely playing at love—a pastime with which he entertained himself when, as Mr. Whibley has put it happily, he, "still unabashed, did the honours of Great Britain in a modest hotel at Calais."

"Yesterday morning," he wrote to a lady when he was in exile, "I was subdued almost to insanity, but your note in the evening restored me to peace and equanimity, and, as if I had been redeemed from earthly purgatory, placed me in heaven. Thank you, thank you, dearest of beings; how can I retribute all this benevolent open-heartedness, this delightful proof and avowal of my not being indifferent to you? I cannot, by inanimate words, represent the excess of my feelings towards you: take, then, with indulgent admission and forbearance, the simple boon, a sacred pledge of my heart's deepest affections for you; they are rooted in my very soul and existence; they will never deviate; they will never die away.

"By the dim light that was remaining I perceived something in white at your *porte-cochère*. It was evident that I was recognised, and the figure advanced with your *billet*. In an instant I seized the hand of your faithful and intelligent messenger, compressing it forcibly, and had she been as forbidding as the old Dowager Duchess of ——, I should have saluted her, if I had not fancied at the instant that I heard some one coming up the street. We parted, and I returned to my solitary chamber.

"There I lacerated the letter with impatience, and then

the light of love and of joy, and the refreshing breath of evening stole through the open window over my entranced senses. After that I sought another stroll on the ramparts, and again returned home contented with you, with myself, and with the world.

"I have known few that could equal, none that could excel you; yet they possessed not your charms of countenance, your form, your heart, in my estimation. Certainly they did not possess that unaffected and fervent homage, which in my constant memory—in my heart's blood—and in my devoted soul I bear to you.

"Ever most affectionately yours,

"GEORGE BRUMMELL."

His facile humour never entirely deserted him, and so late as 1834, when he was approaching sixty, an elderly English lady proposing to him at écarté, he replied, "Yes, dearest," at which she was so angry as to give Brummell an opportunity to display at once his talent for sarcasm and his gift of versifying.

"To MISS PAWLTER

"I called you 'dearest,' dire offence!
'Twas only said in jest;
For 'dearest,' in its common sense,
Means her who loves the best.

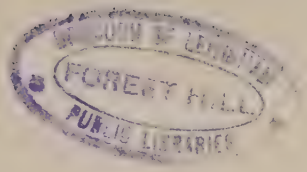
"But jealous of your virgin fame,
And squeamish in a crowd,
With prim reproach, you scoff'd the name,
Because—'twas said aloud.

"Ah! many a year has run its race,
And many a lover too,
Since blush of youth adorn'd that face,
And flattering words were true.

"Thought you that I, grown old in guile,
With faded looks was taken,
And sought to gain a treacherous smile,
By others long forsaken?

"No, no, 't would reason's self abuse.
Immaculate Miss Pawlter,
With you to weave a tender noose—
That noose would be a halter!

"Good-night! but since a thoughtless joke,
An idle fib, could fret you,
Believe me, if the truth I spoke,
You'd curse the hour I met you.



CHAPTER X

THE *BEAU'S* DAY

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CHAPTER X

THE *BEAU'S* DAY

"HOW live the *haut ton* votaries of the town,
Who live so fast that they run pleasure down ?
So fleet that youth and age together blend,
Both premature, both brought to speedy end.
At two they dress ; at five take morning walk,
Appear on horseback, or in Bond Street stalk :
Dine upon dainties, never to be paid ;
In ultra fashion, scented and arrayed ;
Look in at play, or opera, party, ball,
At club or gambling-house next see them call ;
Pick bone at supper, about three or four,
And, next day, play the self-same gambols o'er.
Childish their pastime, silly is their prate,
Pleas'd with a straw, with each fresh whim elate ;
Ta'en by a fashion, guided by a fool,
To some successful idiot still a tool ;
The faithful copy of a picture base,
Proud of what virtue would esteem disgrace.
Unchang'd in countenance, save when the flush
Of bottle, or of paint produce the blush ;
Living with half the town, without one friend,
This, of *Haut ton*, beginning is and end." [1]

[1] *Life, High and Low*, p. 32.

These lines from a contemporary satire give a truthful picture of the way in which a Regency buck contrived to spend his life. The *beau*, indeed, devoted his days exclusively to the pursuit of pleasure, and it seems to have been, not only the most idle, but the most wearisome existence conceivable. The late hour at which the modish man about town retired to rest naturally precluded early rising, and he rarely thought of getting up until after noon. Two hours was the least that any self-respecting dandy could devote to his toilet and his breakfast; and, as likely as not, the clock had struck three before he would sally forth, most probably to his club in St. James's Street.

"The Campus Martius of St. James's Street,
Where the *beau*'s cavalry pace to and fro
Before they take the field in Rotten Row;
Where Brooks's Blues, and Weltzie's Light Dragoons
Dismount in files and ogle in platoons." [1]

St. James's Street was then, as now, the hub of fashion, a street of memories of great men, from Piccadilly to the old Palace at the bottom of the hill, where the sentries still watch, and the clock-tower unflinchingly meets the gaze of the

[1] Moore: *Life of Sheridan*, 1825, vol. i. p. 336.

twentieth-century clubman. To the dandies of the Regency the short street was merely a place where friends could be encountered at almost any hour of the day; yet they themselves, all-unknowing, and careless of posterity, made history as they walked.

"St. James's Street, of classic fame,
For Fashion still is seen there;
St. James's Street? I know the name,
I almost think I've been there!
Why, that's where *Sacharissa* sighed
When Waller read his ditty;
Where Byron lived, and Gibbon died,
And Alvanley was witty.

"A famous Street! To yonder Park
Young Churchill stole in class-time;[1]
Come, gaze on fifty men of mark,
And then recall the pass-time.
The *plats* at White's, the play at *Crock's*,
The bumpers to Miss Gunning;
The *bonhomie* of Charley Fox,
And Selwyn's ghastly funning.

"The dear old Street of clubs and *cribs*,
As north and south it stretches,
Still seems to smack of Rolliad squibs,
And Gillray's fiercer sketches;

[1] Charles Churchill, the satirist, educated at Westminster School, 1739–1748.

The quaint old dress, the grand old style,
The *mots*, the racy stories;
The wine, the dice, the wit, the bile—
The hate of Whigs and Tories!" [1]

Some *beaux* may have wandered farther afield to call on their acquaintances in Mayfair or in that new world of streets between Knightsbridge and Pimlico, known as Belgravia; others may have strolled through Bond Street—"an ugly, inconvenient street," thought Louis Simond, "the attractions of which it is difficult to understand" [2]—or walked along Piccadilly to see what progress Nash was making with the building of Regent Street.[3] Enterprising young men may have left cards on merchant-princes in Bloomsbury, or on

[1] Locker-Lampson: *St. James's Street.*

[2] *Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain* . . . . 1810 and 1811.

[3] Regent Street was begun in 1811, and two years later was opened as a public thoroughfare. It was designed by Richard Nash, who intended it to connect Carlton House with the Regent's Park, where the Prince of Wales proposed to build a house. "There is no news that you'd care to hear of," wrote Tom Moore to James Corry on October 24, 1811, "except that the Prince is to have a villa upon Primrose Hill connected by a fine street with Carlton House, and is so pleased with this magnificent plan, that he has been heard to say 'it will quite eclipse Napoleon.'" It is related by a contemporary that the strange mixture of Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian styles of architecture, employed by Nash in the Regent Street houses, was, for want of a better designation, and as emanating from him, called Nash's "Positive Order!"

Anglo-Indian friends in Langham Place. Those who wanted a ride may have cantered past Euston, which was then a nursery garden, eastward through the villages of Mile End, Stepney, Hackney, and Bow; or in the opposite direction, down the New Road and through the meadows of Maida Vale to the isolated hamlet of Westbourne Grove or the fields of Notting Hill; or northward to rural Hampstead and Highgate, stopping for refreshment at the inn at Chalk Farm, close by which was a famous duelling ground.

Driving was, of course, one of the favourite pursuits of the man about town. The Tilbury, invented by a hard-working mechanic, who thereby acquired fame and wealth, was the fashionable vehicle of the earlier years of the Regency. It had the mail coach spring behind and the others under the shaft, but while it was well suited for the London streets, being hung so low it ran very heavily on the less perfect roads beyond the metropolitan area This defect Fitzroy Stanhope set himself to remedy, and he thought of a vehicle, called after himself, which was a little higher than the carriage it supplanted, and had four telegraphic springs, thus avoiding the long shaft spring getting all under the body. Later Dennet

introduced a further improvement—grasshopper springs at the side and cross springs behind—and this about 1819 replaced the earlier inventions. In these carts the owner drove himself, and he would sit at the extreme edge of the vehicle, with his hands at right angle to the wrist, the reins held loosely and the whip elbow slightly raised.[1]

These vehicles were for everyday use, when the dandy was, as it were, in mufti; but on occasions when he wished to show himself in all his glory, he would appear in a phaeton-and-four. The Prince, it is true, used to drive with six horses and postilions; but this was tacitly regarded as a royal prerogative, and lesser mortals were content, or pretended to be content, with four-in-hand. Bands of celebrated "whips" founded driving clubs, such as the Barouche Club, the Defiance Club, and the Tandem Club; but the most famous of these was the Whip, afterwards the Four-Horse, Club, which was established in 1808.

"ON THE WHIP CLUB.

"Two varying races are in Britain born,
One courts a nation's praises, one her scorn;

[1] Duke of Beaufort: *Driving*; Larwood, *Story of the London Parks*; Lennox, *Fashion*, etc.

Those pant her sons o'er tented fields to guide,
Or steer her thunders thro' the foaming tide;
Whilst these, disgraceful born in luckless hour,
To guess their sires each a sure clue affords,
These are the coachmen's sons, and those my Lord's,
Both follow Fame, pursuing different courses;
Those, Britain, scourge thy foes—and these thy horses:
Give them their due, nor let occasion slip;
On those thy laurels lay—on these thy whip!" [1]

The Four-Horse Club met three times a week from the beginning of May to the middle of June, the coaches were yellow-bodied, with "dickies," the horses bay—though this was not imperative—and the harness silver-mounted. Under the Regency the members wore, we are told, "dark green, long-waisted, single-breast frocks, with yellow buttons, on which were engraved the words 'Four-in-Hand'; waistcoats of Kerseymere, ornamented alternatively with stripes of blue and yellow; small clothing of white corduroy made moderately high, and very long over the knee, buttoning in front over the shin-bone; boots very short with long tops, only one outside strap to each and one to the back, the latter being employed to keep the breeches in a longitudinal shape;

[1] *Annual Register*, vol. lix. p. 883.

conical hat with wide brim; box or driving coat of drab cloth with fifteen capes and two tiers of pockets; cravat of white muslin spotted with black, and a bouquet of myrtle, pink, and geranium in the buttonhole."[1]

It was a fad of many *beaux* to dress as stage-coachmen and to imitate the conversation and habits of the Jehus—Mr. Akers going so far as to have his front teeth filed and to pay fifty guineas to "Dick" Vaughan, *alias* "Hell Fire Dick," the driver of the Cambridge "Telegraph," to teach him to spit in the manner of the confraternity. These imitation coachmen would drive their own private vehicles, but would mimic the duties of their prototypes so exactly that they would actually pull up at the White Horse Cellars, and pretend to deliver parcels.[2] It was this quaint amusement that Byron satirised in "The Devil's Drive":

> "The Devil first saw, as he thought, the mail,
> Its coachman and his coat;

[1] Larwood: *Story of the London Parks*, vol. i. p. 284. An earlier dress of the members of the Club was, "a drab coat, reaching to the ankles, with three tiers of pockets, and mother-of-pearl buttons as large as five-shilling pieces. The waistcoat was blue, with yellow stripes an inch wide; breeches of plush, with strings and rosettes to each knee; and . . . the hat . . . three and a half inches deep in the crown."—Duke of Beaufort: *Driving*.

[2] Grantley Berkeley: *My Life and Recollections*, vol. i. p. 268.

So, instead of a pistol, he cocked his tail,
And seized him by the throat.
'Aha!' quoth he, 'what have we here?
'Tis a new barouche and an ancient peer!' [1]

"So he sat him on his box again,
And bade him have no fear,
But be true to his club, and staunch to his rein,
His brothel and his beer;
'Next to seeing a lord at the council board,
I would rather see him here.'"

A few sportsmen may have shot snipe in the Regent's Park, or have practised boxing or fencing in the establishments of "Gentleman" Jackson or Shaw the Lifeguardsman; but the majority, when there was no special event, such as a race-meeting, were more than content to while away the afternoon at their clubs.

Dinner was the great event of the day, and the hour had advanced from between two and four o'clock in 1788 to between five and six; but the dandies made strenuous efforts to force upon the world a still later hour. They endeavoured to achieve their purpose by persistent unpunctuality.

[1] The "ancient peer" may have been the well-known "whip," Philip Stanhope, fifth Earl of Chesterfield (1755–1815), Privy Councillor 1784.

" If invited to dinner, of course, they must wait ;
When six is their hour, I lounge in about eight :
With my coat flying off, appear crabbed and surly,
And damn the *low* fashion of dining so early ! " [1]

Charles Morris was once a victim of this discourteous practice, which, naturally enough, aroused his ire.

" On Thursday, with dandies I dined, like an ass,
And more punish'd was seldom poor sinner :
Six, precisely, was named ; but that time was, alas !
Scarce within half a day of the dinner.
Three hours, from six, sat I kicking my chair,
Filled with wind, till my trunk seemed to bellow ;
At nine came the guests, bawling out, on the stair,
' Lord ! how early you dine, my good fellow ! ' " [2]

The only man who seems to have fought the habit of unpunctuality with success was the Marquis of Abercorn, who issued invitations for a dinner-party, the hour on the card being given as five o'clock. As the clock struck dinner was announced, though only one guest had arrived. At six o'clock others came, and, without making any apology, took their seats, but showed symptoms of surprise and confusion when they were

[1] *The Pursuits of Fashion.* [2] *The Raven.*

given the course which the host had reached. The most fashionable folk appeared at seven o'clock, and, instead of dinner, were served with coffee!

The *beaux* among themselves vied with one another in making dinner as late as possible, and it is related how one night at the Opera, when the hour was past eleven, Sir Lumley Skeffington, then in his most palmy days, cried to a friend in another box, in his usually drawling manner, "Temple—at—what—hour—do—you—dine—to-day?" For a while, indeed, dinner *after* the Opera was the fashion! No wonder that Rogers said that this habit of dining later and later would soon "end in one never dining until to-morrow!"

The dinner itself, even in the houses that boasted a *cordon bleu*, were remarkably solid. Louis Simond, who noticed that the English dinner at the time of the Regency differed less from the French meal than formerly, with the comment that, "the soup is always a *consommé*, succulent and highly seasoned: vegetables, on the contrary, are exhibited in all the simplicity of nature, like hay to horses, only a little boiled instead of dried," has preserved a sketch of a moderate dinner for ten or a dozen people.

First Course.	Oyster Sauce.	Fowls.	Vegetables.
	Fish.	Soup.	Roast or Boiled Beef.
	Spinach.	Bacon.	Vegetables.
Second Course.	Creams.	Pastry.	Cauliflowers.
	Ragoût à la Françoise.	Cream.	Game.
	Celery.	Macaroni.	Pastry.
Dessert.	Walnuts.		Raisins and Almonds.
	Apples.	Cakes.	Pears.
	Raisins and Almonds.		Oranges.[1]

For the *menu* of a grand dinner we turn to Captain Gronow's "Reminiscences." "Mulligatawny and turtle soups were the first dishes placed before you; a little lower, the eye met with the familiar salmon at one end of the table, and the turbot, surrounded by smelts, at the other. The first course was sure to be followed by a saddle of mutton or a piece of roast beef; and then you could take your oath that fowls, tongue, and ham, would as assuredly succeed as darkness after day. When these never-ending *pièces de résistance* were

[1] *Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain* . . . . 1810 and 1811. "It is singular, that the same animal which, when living, has an English name, has a French one when slaughtered. A sheep becomes mutton, an ox beef, and a hog pork."—*Ibid.*

occupying the table, what were called French dishes were, for custom's sake, added to the solid abundance. The French, or side dishes, consisted of very mild but very abortive attempts at continental cookery, and I have always observed that they met with the neglect and contempt that they merited. The universally adored and ever-popular boiled potato, produced at the very earliest period of the dinner, was eaten with everything, up to the moment when sweets appeared. Our vegetables, the best in the world, were never honoured by an accompanying sauce, and generally came to the table cold. A prime difficulty to overcome was the placing on your fork, and finally in your mouth, some half-dozen different eatables which occupied your plate at the same time. For example, your plate would contain, say, a slice of turkey, a piece of stuffing, a sausage, pickles, a slice of tongue, cauliflower, and potatoes. According to habit and custom, a judicious and careful selection from this little bazaar of good things was to be made, with an endeavour to place a portion of each in your mouth at the same moment. In fact, it appeared to me that we used to do all our compound cookery between our jaws. The dessert—generally ordered at Messrs. Grange's or at Owen's in Bond Street—if for a

dozen people, would cost at least as many pounds. The wines were chiefly port, sherry, and hock; claret, and even Burgundy, being then designated 'poor, thin, washy stuff.' A perpetual thirst seemed to come over people as soon as they had tasted their soup; as from that moment everybody was taking wine with everybody else till the close of the dinner; and such wine as produced that class of cordiality which frequently wanders into stupefaction. How all this sort of eating and drinking ended was obvious, from the prevalence of gout, and the necessity of every one making the pill-box their constant bedroom companion."

After dinner there were, of course, a variety of amusements for the *beaux*. They might go to a prize-fight, or to a rout where, according to the account of a foreigner temporarily domiciled in England, "nobody sits: there is no conversation, no cards, no music, only elbowing, turning, and winding from room to room; then, at the end of a quarter of an hour, spending more time upon the threshold among footmen than you had done upstairs with their masters." They might go to a theatre—in that case it was usual to dine early at the Bedford or the Piazza

[1] Louis Simond: *Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain . . .* 1810 and 1811.

Coffee-House close by—when they might take their places by the "Fops' Alley," and "go behind" between the acts [1]; or they might show themselves at Vauxhall Gardens, where, if they chose, they might sup.

When, however, there was no great attraction at the theatre or at Vauxhall, and no great social function which it was a pleasure or a duty to attend, the *beaux* congregated round the card-tables. The wise contented themselves with indulging in this pastime at the clubs; but many resorted to private houses where the hostess, or another, kept a faro bank. In earlier Georgian days gambling had been restricted almost exclusively to the clubs, but towards the end of the eighteenth century play became general at assemblies and routs. "As faro is the most fashionable circular game in the *haut ton*, in exclusion of melancholy whist, and to prevent a

[1] "The very circumstance of having an *entrée* behind the scenes gave a certain stamp of fashion to the fortunate individual who might be possessed of the privilege, and was eagerly sought after. Then between the acts might be seen a circle of the most distinguished personages about town around the reigning favourites, who made good use of their advantages to their own benefit; and at the end of the season they, like the Hebrews of old, spoiled the Egyptians of their jewels and their purses, which they bore off with them to that Land of Promise, Paris."—Major Chambre: *Recollections of West-End Life.*

company being cantoned into separate parties, a gentleman, of unexceptionable character, will, on invitation, do himself the honour to attend the rout of any lady, nobleman, or gentleman, with a Faro Bank and Fund adequate to the style of play, from five hundred to two thousand guineas. Address G. A., by letter, to be left at Mr. Harding's, Piccadilly, nearly opposite Bond Street. N.B.—This advertisement will not appear again." So ran an advertisement in *The Courier* for March 5, 1794; and more than one lady accepted an offer of fifty guineas a night made by the proprietor of a faro table to set up his bank in her house. In such cases, when the fact became known—and it was to the interest of the proprietor that it should become known—as a natural consequence the company became less select, and in some cases any one might come who would. "If a gentleman in these days has but a few guineas in his purse, and will walk directly up to the faro table, he will be the most welcome guest in the house; it is not necessary for him to speak, or even bow, to a single lady in the room, unless some unfortunate woman at the gaming-table ask him politely for the loan of a few guineas; then his answer need be but short—'No, Dolly, no; can't': for this will ever be received as wit,

though the unfortunate lady's bosom may be heaving, not from the tenderer passions, but with grief and despair at having lost the last farthing." [1]

The play at these semi-public establishments was as a rule fair, because at such places honesty was the best policy; but this was far from being the case at the "hells" that abounded in the West-End. In any case the facilities for play afforded by these places did such widespread harm that there was point in Lord Alvanley asking the mutes, when he saw a hearse stopping outside one of the "hells," "Is the devil really dead, gentlemen?"

"Ah me! what sad pangs ev'ry fibre now feels,
When I view the success of my exquisite *deals*,
My *cutting* and *shuffling*, performed with such ease;
(And their talent is rare who can *cut* when they please).
Ev'ry bet at Macao was decidedly mine;
For, faithful to me, was the snug winning Nine;
And the dice-box, alike, against Squire or Lord,
Brought whatever I pleased on the fortunate board." [2]

. . . . . .

So a retired card-sharper is made to sing by a rhymester who knew the ways of those worthies; and then the same man is made to show what happens even to those who are occasional winners.

[1] George Hanger: *Life and Opinions.* [2] *The Greeks.*

"Ye haunts of St. James's! ye Cyprian fair!
How sweet your amusements: how *winning* your air!
Long, long have I served you, and valued you well,
From the Regent's proud palace to Bennet Street *hell*,[1]
Where nobles and simples alike take their swing,
With th' intention of being *at all in the ring*.
Their eyes are attracted with rouleaus of gold,
Or thousands in paper, so neat in the fold;
Impatient they view them, and seize them elate,
And, when pocketing most, they most swallow the bait.
There's N–g–nt's proud lord, who, to angle for pelf,
Will soon find the secret of diddling himself;
There's H–rb–rt, who lately, as knowing ones tell,
Won a tight seven hundred at house in Pall Mall;[2]
Captain D–v–s, who, now, is a chick of the game,
But, although in *high feather*, the odds will soon tame,
And the Marquis of Bl–ndf–rd, who *touched 'em up rare*,
For a thousand in Bennet Street (all on the square),
Where a service of plate gives a *shine* to the job,
The whole made of crowns from young gentlemen's fobs;
There's Ll–yd and C–m–ck, who'd a martinette be;
For none *drills* a guinea more ably than he—
So his adjutant told him (a pretty good wipe,
Which the Colonel accepted and put in his pipe).

[1] This hell in Bennet Street, St. James's, was, to quote a contemporary guide, "Corner House—Red Baize Door—called a Club House." It had, and catered for, an aristocratic *clientèle*.

[2] There were "hells" at No. 40 and No. 71, Pall Mall.

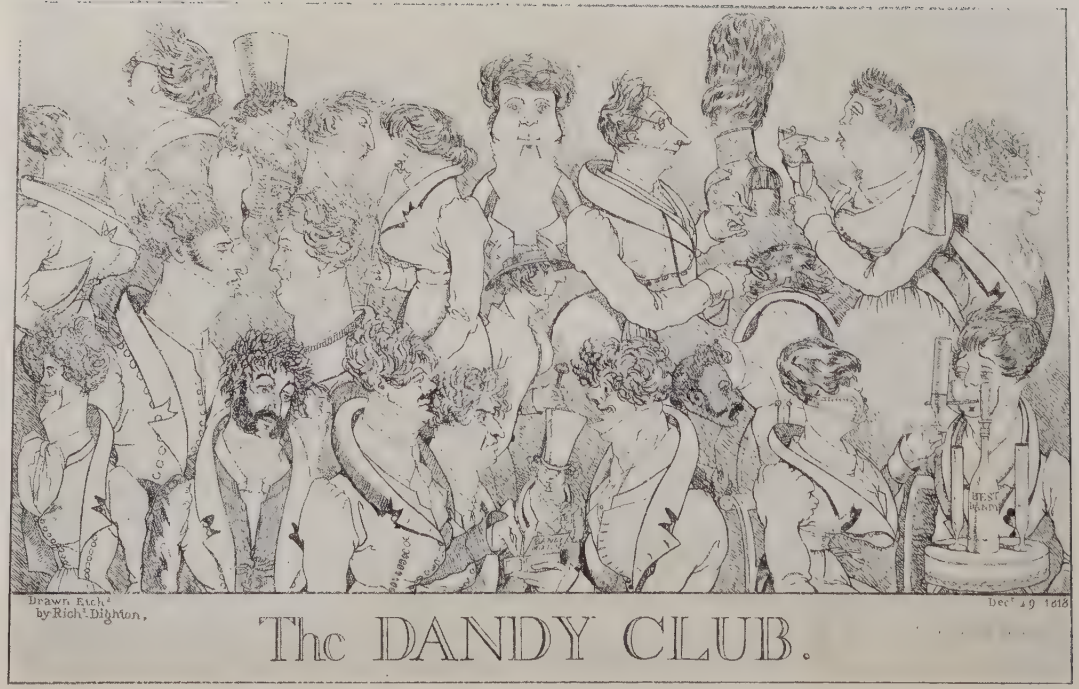
There's a certain rum baronet every one knows,
Who on Saturday nights to the *Two Sevens* [1] goes;
With J—— and Cl——, Billy W—— and two more,
So drunk that they keep merry hell in a roar;
Long D–b–n, then C–rt–r, a son of a gun,
Bill B——, the Doctor, that figure of fun:
They have all won a little, and now *are in force*,
But they'll find that it soon will return to its source;
The knowing ones watch them, and give them their fill,
And they'll soon be reduced to discounting their bill."

. . . . . .

[1] The "Two Sevens" gaming-house derived its name from its number in St. James's Street, 77.

CHAPTER XI

BRUMMELL, THE CLUBS, AND ALMACK'S



A CARICATURE BY R. DIGHTON SATIRISING THE FASHIONS OF THE DANDIES, 1818.

CHAPTER XI

BRUMMELL, THE CLUBS, AND ALMACK'S

TO-DAY there are clubs for everybody, from the peer to the working-man, and from the diplomatist to the music-hall performer, and for every purpose from the glorification or the vilification of the stage to the advancement of women's rights; but at the beginning of the nineteenth century these institutions were few in number and almost exclusively reserved for the aristocracy and the landed gentry, though such wits and *beaux* of distinction as were of humbler birth were sometimes admitted, though they did not always, as it was sometimes found out—too late, fall under Johnson's definition of "clubbable men." Nowadays clubs publish their histories,[1]

[1] *The History of White's* has been privately printed in two great quarto volumes by the Hon. Algernon Bourke, and an account of Grillion's has been issued in the same way. Mr. Percy Fitzgerald has published a volume on the Garrick Club, and Mr. Aaron Watson on the Savage Club. Particulars of many clubs are to be found in Charles Marsh's *Clubs of London*, and John Timbs' *Clubs and Club-Life in London*.

but in the Georgian era they were an unknown land save to the initiated, and they were shrouded in a sort of solemn mystery from the vulgar gaze. No lady would then have called at a club for her male relative, Lady Dorothy Nevill has recently reminded us: to-day many clubs set aside a room in which members may entertain the other sex.

Under the Regency Graham's and the Union were second-rate institutions, nor was Arthur's in the first flight; the membership of "The Club" and Grillion's was very limited, the Naval, a favourite haunt of the Duke of Clarence, was reserved exclusively for the members of the senior service; while the name of the Royal Societies Club sufficiently indicates its scope. The Eccentrics was a social coterie, more interesting than important, which had on its roll such worthies as Fox, Sheridan, Brougham, Lord Petersham, Theodore Hook, and Lord Melbourne; and the Sublime Society of Beefsteaks was a delightful gathering of Bohemians of all ranks. The Pic-nics, well known in its day, was not a club in the ordinary sense of the word, but a select gathering of fashion folk who supped together at Le Texier's public room or at the Pantheon in Oxford Street, the repast being provided by contributions from the members, each of whom dipped into a bag

containing tickets inscribed with the name of the food or drink they had to supply—it might be a haunch of venison or a salad. This quaint idea was brought over from France by Lady Albina Buckinghamshire, one of the presiding spirits of the Pic-nics. The King of Clubs, founded in 1801, was also a dining-club, the forerunner of the present day Boz, Omar, Pepys, and Titmarsh Clubs, and the monthly assembly was held at the old Crown and Anchor tavern in the Strand; but its membership was recruited more from literary than dandiacal circles, and included such celebrities as Rogers, Scarlett, Sydney Smith, Romilly, Lord Holland, Brougham, Porson, Horner, Jeffrey, Whishaw, Hallam, Luttrell, Ricardo, and Mackintosh, of whom the author of "Peter Plymley's Letters" said, his conversation was more brilliant and instructive than that of any human being with whom he ever had the good fortune to be acquainted.

The Alfred Club, which was established in 1808, and set up house at No. 23, Albemarle Street, flourished for nearly half a century, and so soon achieved a great reputation, that, three years after its foundation, it had three hundred and fifty-four candidates for six vacancies! The club had its troubles, however, for Byron, who was a member,

wrote to Francis Hodgson, on December 8, 1811: "The cook has run away and left us liable, which makes our committee very plaintive. Master Brook, our head serving-man, has the gout, and our new cook is none of the best." The Alfred's membership was mainly literary, political, and clerical, and Byron tells us it was the most *recherché* and tiresome of any of the clubs to which he belonged.[1] "It was pleasant," he wrote on another occasion; "a little too sober and literary, and bored with Sotheby and Sir Francis d'Ivernois; but one met Peel, and Ward, and Valentia, and many other pleasant or known people; and it was, upon the whole, a decent resource in a rainy day, in a dearth of parties or parliament, or in an empty season." Lord Alvanley's dissatisfaction with the Alfred arose from its being so clerical, for, when asked if he was still a member, "not exactly," he replied: "I stood it as long as I could, but when the

[1] "I belonged, or belong, to the following Clubs or Societies: to the Alfred, to the Cocoa-Tree, to Watier's, to the Union, to Racket's (at Brighton), to the Pugilistic, to the Owls, or 'Fly by Night,' to the *Cambridge* Whig Club, to the Harrow Club, Cambridge, and to one or two private Clubs, to the Hampden Political Club, and to the Italian Carbonari, etc., etc., etc., 'though last *not least*.' I got into all these, and never stood for any other—at least to my own knowledge. I declined being proposed to several others; though pressed to stand candidate."—Byron: *Detached Thought*, Section 31.

seventeenth bishop was proposed I gave in. I really could not enter the place without being reminded of my catechism."

Among more important and longer-lived clubs there was Boodle's at 28, St. James's Street, known at first as the "Savoir Vivre," to which Mason has an allusion in his "Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers":

> "So when some John his dull invention racks
> To rival Boodle's dinners or Almack's,
> Three uncouth legs of mutton shock our eyes,
> Three roasted geese, three buttered apple pies;"

and there was the Cocoa-Tree, at 64, St. James's Street, which arose out of that coffee-house of which Defoe wrote, "A Whig will no more go to the 'Cocoa-Tree' or 'Ozinda's' than a Tory will be seen at the St. James's," and where at one time the Prince of Wales and Byron were frequent visitors.

Brooks's rose phœnix-like upon the ruins of Almack's Club, and hoisted the Whig colours. It, too, boasted of the name of the Prince of Wales on its roll of members, but his Royal Highness withdrew when his friends Tarleton[1] and Payne[2]

[1] Sir Banastre Tarleton, Bart. (1754–1833), general, author of a *History of the Campaigns of* 1780 *and* 1781.

[2] John Willett Payne (1752–1803), admiral, sometime private secretary to the Prince of Wales.

were blackballed, and founded for himself and his friends a new club, to which his house-steward, Weltzie, gave his name. Sheridan, in spite of the opposition of George Selwyn, became a member of Brooks's, and wrote a rhymed epitaph on the founder:

> "Alas! that Brooks, returned to dust,
> Should pay at length the debt that we,
> Averse to parchment, mortgage, trust,
> Shall pay when forced—as well as he.
> And die so poor, too! He whose trade
> Such profit cleared by draught and deed.
> Though pigeons called him murmuring Brooks,
> And dipped their bills in him at need,
> At length his last conveyance see,
> Each witness mournful as a brother,
> To think that this world's mortgagee
> Must suffer judgment in another!
> Where no appeals to Courts can rest,
> Reversing a supreme decree;
> But each decision stands confessed
> A final precedent *in re*."

If Brummell was a favourite in the boudoirs, he was a very hero in clubland. He was proposed at Brooks's by Mr. Fawkener in 1799, and he remained a member until after he left England. Captain Jesse states that the Beau was "declined, as it is delicately expressed in the ledger of the

From an engraving after Robert Cruikshank.

THE GREAT SUBSCRIPTION ROOM AT BROOKS'S, OR, OPPOSITION MEMBERS ENGAGED UPON HAZARD-OUS POINTS.

club, in May 1816," but the insinuation conveyed by this expression is unwarranted, for the word "declined" always has been, and still is, used at the club in question to signify "resigned" and it does not carry with it any suggestion of compulsory retirement.

What Brooks's was in the politic world, White's, which soon took down the Tory flag and received members without regard to their opinions, was in the realms of fashion; it was, indeed, pre-eminently the home of the dandies. "White's is now a club," Sir William Fraser has written. "It was an Institution; an Institution of the most powerful and effective character which for one hundred and thirty years ruled the Society of London, as regards men, with wonderful discrimination and marvellous force. To be admitted a member of that body gave a young man a *cachet* such as nothing else could give. Looking through the volumes of candidates for many years, the discrimination to be observed is marvellous. The absolute qualifications are difficult to define, but still are strongly marked: '*Je ne sais quoi*,' its device. Neither Rank, Wealth, Wit, nor any quality in itself, enabled a candidate to be sure of election; and although the blackballing, which in some instances continued for years, appears at

first tyrannical, it rarely happened that ultimately the individual, if possessing the particular qualifications desired, did not gain admission. Some were excluded, notwithstanding the annual efforts of a lifetime. Some few were admitted at once; but sooner or later justice was done."[1] This gives a true idea of the importance of that famous club, the members of which, almost as a matter of course, had the *entrée* to society; and men in that day might, without much exaggeration, have been divided into members of White's—and others.

Brummell was elected a member in 1798, on his retirement from the army, and he took his place, as a matter of course, as one of the small coterie that sat in the famous bow-window, which—we have it on the authority of the Hon. Algernon Bourke, the historian of that institution—was sacred ground, to which only the chosen were admitted. Its occupants were the leaders of the inner circle, and the right to stand or sit there was by convention relinquished by the rest. Indeed, Mr. Bourke states, "from members still living, we learn that, within their memory, an ordinary frequenter of White's would as soon have thought of taking his seat on the throne in the House of Lords, as of appropriating one

[1] *Words on Wellington.*

of the chairs in the bow-window."[1] The select coterie, or inner circle, of the club included the Duke of Argyll, Lord Worcester, Lord Alvanley, Lord Foley, John Mills, Henry Pierrepoint, Bradshaw, Lord de Ros, Charles Standish, Edward Montagu, Hervey Aston, Lord Sefton, "Dan" Mackinnon, George Dawson Damer, "Rufus" Lloyd, and a few others whose names now have no interesting associations.[2] So well known was this bay-window that, when it was being enlarged, and its *habitués* were temporarily unable to take their accustomed place, Luttrell thought it worth while to note the circumstance:

"Shot from yon *Heavenly Bow* at White's,
No critic arrow now alights
On some unconscious passer-by,
Whose cape's an inch too low or high;
Whose doctrines are unsound in hat,
In boots, in trousers, in cravat.
On him who braves the shame and guilt
Of gig or Tilbury ill-built;
Sports a barouche with panels darker
Than the last shade turned out by Barker,
Or canters with an awkward seat
And badly mounted, up the street.

[1] *History of White's Club.*

[2] "Golden Ball" was a member of White's, though it is not clear if he sat among the *élite*; and Croker was distinguished as the one man of letters, not a *beau*, who passed the test of the ballot-box.

No laugh confounds the luckless girl
Whose stubborn hair disdains to curl,
Who, large in foot, and long in waist,
Shows want of *blood*, as well as taste ;
Silenced awhile that dreadful battery
Whence never issued sound of flattery ;
That whole artillery of jokes,
Levelled pointblank at humdrum folks ! " [1]

Next in interest to the bay-window at White's was the betting-book, and members vied with each other in organising quaint wagers, some of which are amusing :

Mr. Greville bets Lord Clanwilliam ten guineas, that Lord Stewart will be married to Lady F. Vane in six months.—June 18, 1818. [Clanwilliam paid.]

Sir George Warrender bets Lord Alvanley five pounds, that Colonel Stanhope and Mr. Lucy will be found by a committee of the House of Commons not duly elected.—June 28, 1818. [Alvanley paid.]

Mr. Mills bets Lieutenant-General Mackenzie a pony, that Lord Stewart goes to Vienna before he marries Lady Frances Vane. [Mills paid.]

Lieutenant-General Mackenzie bets Lord Yarmouth sixty guineas to fifty, that the Duke of Cambridge has a child before the Duke of Clarence.

Lord Sefton bets Sir Joseph Copley fifty guineas, that Lisbon and Cadiz will be in Buonaparte's possession on or before the first of April next.—Jan. 17, 1809. [Copley paid.]

[1] *Advice to Julia.*

Mr. G. Talbot bets General Bligh two guineas, that Sir Arthur Wellesley is gazetted for an English peerage before this day three months.—May 12, 1809. [Talbot paid.]

Mr. Howard bets Mr. Raikes ten guineas, that either Lord T. or Lord Pomfret will marry Miss Long.—December 1, 1810. [Howard paid.]

During the twelve years of its life, from 1807 to 1819, no club was more notorious than Watier's, the accounts of the origin of which differ materially. Some authorities state that it was founded by John Maddocks (who married Lord Craven's sister and cut his throat during a fit of madness), Calvert, and Lord Headfort, for harmonic meetings; others declare that it came into being at the suggestion of the Prince of Wales, who, when some members of White's and Brooks's were dining with him at Carlton House, asked what sort of dinners were served at these clubs, and, receiving from Sir Thomas Stepney the reply, "The eternal joint and beefsteaks, the boiled fowl with oyster sauce, and an apple tart. This is what we have, sir, and very monotonous fare it is," sent for his chef, Watier, and invited him to take a house and organise a club where special attention should be given to the *cuisine*. Perhaps these versions may be reconciled by as-

suming that Watier took over 81, Piccadilly, from the harmonic society; and, indeed, this seems to have been the case, to judge from a passage in Raikes's *Journal*: "This destination of the club was soon changed. The dinners were so *recherchés* and so much talked of in town, that all the young men of fashion and fortune became members of it. The catches and glees were then superseded by cards and dice; the most luxurious dinners were furnished at any price, as the deep play at night rendered all charges a matter of indifference. Macao was the constant game, and thousands passed from one to another with as much facility as marbles."

Brummell was the club's perpetual president, the Duke of York was a member, and Byron too, who christened it "The Dandy Club." "I liked the Dandies," he wrote; "they were always very civil to me, though in general they disliked literary people, and persecuted and mystified Madame de Staël, Lewis, Horace Twiss, and the like, damnably. They persuaded Madame de Staël that Alvanley had a hundred thousand a year, etc., etc., till she praised him to his *face* for his *beauty*! and made a set at him for Albertine (*Libertine*, as Brummell baptised her, though the poor girl was and is as correct as maid or wife

can be, and very amiable withal), and a hundred fooleries besides. The truth is, that, though I gave up the business early, I had a tinge of Dandyism in my minority, and probably retained enough of it to conciliate the great ones, at four-and-twenty. I had gamed, and drank, and taken my degrees in most dissipations; and having no pedantry, and not being overbearing, we ran quietly together. I knew them all more or less, and they made me a member of Watier's (a superb club at that time), being, I take it, the only literary man (except *two others*, both men of the world, M. and S.) in it.

"Our Masquerade was a grand one; so was the Dandy Ball, at the Argyle, but that (the latter) was given by the four Chiefs B., M., A., and P., if I err not."[1]

What the great clubs were to the men of the period, Almack's Assembly was to the whole of society, male and female. When William Almack,[2]

[1] "In my time, Watier's was the Dandy Club, of which (though no dandy) I was a member; at the time too of its greatest glory, when Brummell and Mildmay, Alvanley and Pierrepoint, gave the Dandy Balls; and we (the club, that is) got up the famous masquerade at Burlington House and Garden for Wellington."—Byron to Lady Blessington, April 5, 1823.—Byron appeared in the character of a Caloyer or Eastern monk.

[2] It is said that the man's name was MacCall, and that he transposed it to Almack on coming to London—perhaps because of the unpopularity of the Scotch in the Metropolis.

a Scotchman, came to London as a valet in the suite of the Duke of Hamilton, though there is no doubt he was an ambitious fellow, he can scarcely have hoped that his name would be a household word more than a century and a quarter after his death. Yet to-day Almack has still a world-wide reputation, though, by the irony of fate, he had been dead for many years before the great fame began to attach itself to him. The valet must have been a clever as well as a provident man, for he found money to run the Thatched House Tavern in St. James's Street: a venture which in a short time proved so lucrative that he was able to establish Almack's Club in 1764, and to build with "hot bricks and boiling water" the historic "Almack's Rooms," in King Street, St. James's, which still exist as "Willis's Rooms," so called after the husband of Almack's niece and heiress, who inherited the property in 1781. The Rooms were opened on February 20, 1765, and the venture was from the first successful. "There is now opened here, in three very elegant new-built rooms, a ten-guinea subscription, for which you have a ball and supper once a week for twelve weeks. You may imagine by the sum the company is chosen. . . . . The men's tickets are not transferable, so if the ladies do not like us, they have

no opportunity of changing us. . . . Our female Almack's flourish beyond description. Almack's Scotch face, in a bag-wig, waiting at supper, would divert you, as would his lady in a sack, making tea and curtseying to the duchesses." So Gilly Williams wrote to his friend Selwyn at the time; and in 1770 Horace Walpole wrote to Edward Montagu: "There is a new institution that begins to make, and, if it proceeds, will make a considerable noise. It is a club of both sexes, to be erected at Almack's, on the model of that of the men of White's. Mrs. Fitzroy, Lady Pembroke, Mrs. Meynell, Lady Molyneux, Miss Pelham, and Miss Lloyd are the foundresses."

All the fashionable world desired the *entrée*, but the foundresses at once made it clear that the institution was to be the most exclusive ever known. "The *female* club I told you of," wrote Mrs. Boscawen to Mrs. Delany, "is removed from their quarters, Lady Pembroke objecting to a tavern; it meets, therefore, for the present at certain rooms of Almack's, who for another year is to provide a private house. The first fourteen who imagined and planned it settled its rules and constitution; these were framed upon the model of one of the clubs at Almack's. There are seventy-five chosen (the whole number is to be two hundred). The

ladies nominate and choose the gentlemen, and *vice versa*; so that no lady can exclude a lady, or gentleman a gentleman! The Duchess of Bedford was at first blackballed, but is since admitted. . . Lady Rochfort and Lady Harrington are blackballed, as are Lord March, Mr. Boothby, and one or two more who think themselves pretty gentlemen *du premier ordre*, but it is plain the ladies are not of their opinion. When any of the ladies dine with the society, they are to send word before, but supper comes of course, and is to be served always at eleven. Play is to be deep and constant probably." The principle of exclusiveness was still enforced at the period of which this book treats. "At the present time," Gronow recorded in 1863 of Almack's half a century earlier, "one can hardly conceive the importance which was attached to getting admittance to Almack's, the seventh heaven of the fashionable world. Of the three hundred officers of the Foot-Guards, not more than half a dozen were honoured by vouchers of admission to this exclusive temple of the *beau monde*; the gates of which were guarded by lady patronesses, whose smiles or frowns consigned men and women to happiness or despair. These lady patronesses were the Ladies Castlereagh, Jersey, Cowper, and Sefton,

Mrs. Drummond Burrell, the Princess Esterhazy, and the Countess Lieven. The most popular of these *grandes dames* was unquestionably Lady Cowper, now Lady Palmerston. Lady Jersey's bearing, on the contrary, was that of a theatrical tragedy queen, and whilst attempting the sublime, she frequently made herself simply ridiculous, being inconceivably rude, and in her manner often ill-bred. Lady Sefton was kind and amiable, Madame de Lieven haughty and exclusive; Princess Esterhazy was a *bon enfant*, Lady Castlereagh and Mrs. Burrell *de très grandes dames*."

"A feminine oligarchy less in number but equal in power to the Venetian Council of Ten": so Grantley Berkeley[1] described the committee of Lady Patronesses, whose arbitrary methods provoked the author of a novel bearing the simple title "Almack's" to the following satirical dedication:

"To that most distinguished and despotic CONCLAVE, composed of their High Mightinesses The Ladies Patronesses of the Balls at ALMACK'S, The Rulers of Fashion, The Arbiters of Taste, The Leaders of *Ton*, and the Makers of Manners, Whose sovereign sway over 'the world' of London has long been established on the firmest basis, Whose Decrees are Laws, and from whose judgment there

[1] *Life and Recollections.*

is no appeal; To these important personages, all and severally, Who have formed, or who do form, any part of that ADMINISTRATION, usually denominated THE WILLIS COALITION CABAL, Whether members of the Committee of Supply, or Cabinet Counsellors, Holding seats at the Board of Control, the Following Pages, are with all due respect, humbly dedicated by "An Old Subscriber." [1]

Admission to the balls was only to be secured by vouchers issued by the patronesses, who, as is shown by the proportion of the Guards who obtained them, doled out their favours with niggardly hands. There was often as much *finesse* necessary, and as much diplomacy exercised in this matter, as in negotiating a treaty between two great countries.

"How shall the Muse, with colours faint
And pencil blunt, aspire to paint
Such high-raised hopes, such chilling fears,
Entreaties, threatenings, smiles, and tears!
The vainest beauty will renounce
Her last imported blonde or flounce;
The gamester leaves a raw beginner,
The diner-out forgo his dinner;

[1] *Almack's* was published anonymously in 1827, and the authorship was long kept secret, because the novel was written against Mrs. Beaumont of Bretton, who is introduced into the story as Lady Birmingham. The *Pickering Memoirs* state that the author was Mrs. Hudson (*née* Marianne Spencer Stanhope).

The stern reformer change his notions,
And waive his notices of motions ;
The bold become an abject croucher,
And the grave—giggle for a *voucher*." [1]

Vouchers were granted only to those personally known to one at least of the patronesses, while Lady Jersey, the high priestess, would never admit any one unless she had proof that the applicant was a skilful dancer, and under no circumstances would she grant admission to any one connected with commerce—a restriction that was none the less galling because she was the heiress of the banker Robert Child, whose surname was subsequently prefixed to his own by her husband, the fifth Earl.[2] Those whose position in society was assured were, all things being equal, allowed without protest to enter the sacred precincts: the tug of war came when those who applied for

[1] Luttrell: *Advice to Julia.*

[2] "Lord Jersey, when a young man, was desperately in love with my aunt Andover. He was very handsome and very charming . . . . The want of money proved a serious obstacle, and, while loving her, he married the girl she was chaperoning, the heiress of Child's Bank. When I was going out in London, Lady Jersey was the undisputed queen and ruler of fashion, before whose worldly sway all things gave way. She was frightfully extravagant; but to the *modiste* her name was more important than the payment of her bills. She told my mother, when she was staying at Holkham, that life was not worth living after thirty; nevertheless at eighty she found it not to be despised."—A. M. W. Pickering: *Memoirs.*

the coveted privilege were on the fringe of society, and then the decisions of the patronesses were, it must be said, often arbitrary, though, on the whole, just—according to their lights.

As a rule, the rejected hid their diminished heads for a while, and then, plucking up courage, made further efforts to enter the charmed circle; but now and then the refusal was not taken in good part, as in the case of a captain in the Guards, whose application for a voucher was answered in the negative by Willis. The captain, in a towering rage, called on Willis, who excused himself for his letter by saying, "Sir, I wrote to you at the request of Lady Jersey, saying that as her ladyship was unacquainted with you, I had been instructed to reply to your letter by stating that the Lady Patronesses declined sending you a ticket for the ball." As this was said in public, the captain sent a *cartel* to Lord Jersey, who refused to meet him, on the ground that if all the persons who did not receive tickets from his wife were to call him out, he should have to make up his mind to become a target for young officers!

> "All on that magic List depends;
> Fame, fortune, fashion, lovers, friends:
> 'Tis that which gratifies or vexes
> All ranks, all ages, and both sexes.

If once to Almack's you belong,
Like monarchs, you can do no wrong ;
But banished thence on Wednesday night,
By Jove, you can do nothing right." [1]

Every precaution was taken to prevent the intrusion of those who had not the magic key in the form of the voucher.

" What form is that, with looks so sinister ?—
Willis, their Excellencies' minister.—
See where in portly pride he stands
To execute their high commands ;
Unmoved his heart, unbribed his hands.
See, where the barrier he prepares
Just at the bottom of the stairs,
Midst fragrant flowers and shrubs exotic ;—
A man relentless and despotic
As he of Tunis, or Algiers,
Or any of their Grand Viziers.

" Suppose the prize by hundred miss'd
Is yours at last.—You're on the list.—
Your voucher's issued, duly signed ;
But hold—your ticket's left behind.
What's to be done ? there's no admission.
In vain you flatter, scold, petition,
Feel your blood mounting like a rocket,
Fumble in vain in every pocket.
' The rule's so strict, I dare not stretch it,'
Cries Willis, ' pray, my lord, go fetch it.'—

[1] Luttrell: *Advice to Julia.*

'Nonsense,' you cry, 'so late at night—
Surely you know me, sir, by sight.'
'Excuse me—the committee sat
This morning.'—'Did they, what of that?'
'An order given this very day,
My lord, I dare not disobey.
Your pardon.' Further parley's vain;
So for your ticket, in the rain,
Breathless, you canter home again." [1]

There were other rules, too, to be observed, besides the production of vouchers. "No gentleman shall appear at the assemblies without being dressed in knee-breeches, white cravat, and *chapeau bras*," was one of the regulations, and though you were the Duke of Wellington, as, indeed, once did happen, if you contravened this law and appeared in trousers, you must return home and change your nether garments.[2]

"To The Lady Patronesses of Almack's.

"Tired of our trousers are ye grown?
But, since to them your anger reaches,
Is it because 'tis so well known,
You always love to *wear the breeches?*"

[1] Luttrell: *Advice to Julia.*

[2] "Who is there that does not know that the Lady Patronesses of Almack's have interdicted pantaloons, tight or loose, at their assemblies? We have seen a MS. instruction (which, alas! never *was* printed), from this mighty conclave, announcing their fiat in these words: '*Gentlemen will not be admitted without breeches and stockings!*'" —Theodore Hook in *John Bull*, 1823.

Beau Brummell. Comte de St. Antonio. Sir George Warrender.
Duchess of Rutland. Princess Esterhazy. Count St. Aldigonde.

A BALL AT ALMACK'S—1815.

It was not enough to wear knee-breeches, and have your ticket with you; you must present yourself before half-past eleven, when the doors were closed against all comers.[1]

"What sounds were those ?—O earth and heaven !
Heard you the chimes—*half-past eleven ?*
They tell, with iron tongue, your fate,
Unhappy lingerer, if you're late.
Haste, while ye may.—Behold ! approaches
The last of yonder string of coaches ;
Stern Willis, in a moment more,
Closes th' inexorable door,
And great the conjuror must be
Who can cry, 'Open, Sesame !'"

. . . . .

"Such is the rule, which none infringes.
The door one jot upon its hinges
Moves not. Once past the fatal hour,
Willis has no dispensing power.
Spite of persuasion, tears, or force,
'The law,' he cries, 'must take its course.'
And men may swear, and women pout.
No matter,—they are all shut out."

Some ingenious person, however, found a way to evade the rule: by leaving his coat in his

[1] This rule was subsequently modified to the extent that those carriages which had lined up in King Street by half-past eleven might unload their passengers, so that it was often after midnight when the last vehicle drove off. This did not work well, and was abandoned, when holders of vouchers were allowed to enter until twelve o'clock.

carriage, lying *perdu* in the shadow close by, and, when the first batch of ladies drove off, going upstairs, as if he was one of the party, with the gentlemen who had escorted them to their vehicle.[1]

It seems strange to-day, when society is split up into so many powerful cliques, that the supremacy of Almack's should have been so long unchallenged, and its power seems largely to have rested, not only on its exclusiveness—that bait which so surely attracts all outsiders—but on the fact that it always admitted the leaders of the dandiacal body, as Carlyle called the *beaux*, and so was assured of the loyalty of the followers of those distinguished persons. Indeed, it was as the headquarters of the dandies that Professor Teufelsdroch regarded it. "They have their Temple, whereof the chief, as the Jewish Temple did, stands in the metropolis; and is named *Almack's*, a word of uncertain etymology," that famous scholar has written. "They worship principally by night; and have their High-priests and High-priestesses, who, however, do not

[1] Yet another unwritten rule at Almack's may be deduced from the following: "I have seen many a man, *Bacchi plenus*, enter the sacred precincts of an Almack's ball, who, if he had appeared in a drawing-room with clothes redolent of tobacco, would never again have found admittance there."—Lord William Pitt Lennox: *Fashion.*

continue for life. The rites, by some supposed to be of a Menadic sort, or perhaps with an Eleusinian or Cabiric character, are held strictly secret. Nor are Sacred Books wanting to the Sect; these they call *Fashionable Novels*: however the Canon is not completed, and some are canonical and others not." [1]

An assembly that could regulate the hour of arrival of its members, and could venture to turn away the Duke of Wellington for a breach of its rules, might legitimately regard itself as the arbiter, even the despot, of fashion; and certainly no innovations stood any reasonable chance of acceptance that were not sanctioned by it: so it came to pass, as a matter of course, that all changes in any department of fashionable life were submitted for its august approval. Nothing could disturb its serenity. You might lampoon the Lady Patronesses, but you left them unscathed. They were impervious to all comment, satirical or kindly; they swerved not from their path for any shaft of wit; and their word was law to the uttermost limits of their kingdom. Yet on one occasion they were nearly defeated, and, indeed, it is probable that they escaped such a catastrophe only by enlisting the support of a crowned head.

[1] *Sartor Resartus.*

At Almack's, as elsewhere in London, the day had passed when in the ball-room the minuet and other stately movements were fashionable; and during the early years of the Regency the dances in vogue were the English country dances, Scotch jigs, and Highland reels, the last, introduced into London, it is said, by Jane, Duchess of Gordon, and performed by her to the accompaniment of an orchestra from Edinburgh conducted by Niel Gow, the composer of "Bonnie Prince Charlie." It was the introduction of a new dance that shook, not only Almack's, but all England to its foundations. In 1815 Lady Jersey and Count Aldegonde, Lady Harriet Butler and Mr. Montgomery, Lady Susan Ryde and Mr. Montagu, and Miss Montgomery and Mr. Charles Standish (or, some authorities say, Mr. Haytey) danced the first set of quadrilles, which, presented by such sponsors, at once became fashionable. The quadrilles evoked much interest, but this was nothing compared with the sensation that had been caused two years earlier by the introduction from abroad of the waltz.

Some such dance, it appears, had been known in England nearly a score of years before, for in *The Times* of February 19, 1796, we read: "The balls at Southampton are exceedingly lively

and well-attended. The young ladies are particularly favourable to a German dance, called the Volse: for squeezing, hugging, etc., it is excellent, and more than one Lady has actually fainted in the middle of it." The "Volse," however, had not penetrated to the metropolis, or at least to the fashionable circles thereof; and when in 1813 it was danced at Almack's for the first time—it was then a slow movement in *trois temps*—by Madame de Lieven and "Cupid" Palmerston, and Princess Esterhazy and Baron de Neumann, it divided society into two camps: those who welcomed it with open arms, and those who resented the introduction of what appeared to them as a most indecorous proceeding. Lampoon after lampoon was provoked by the new dance, and more than one of these has come down to posterity.

"ON WALTZING.

"With timid step and tranquil, downcast glance,
Behold the well-paired couple now advance;
One hand holds hers, the other grasps her hip,
But licensed to no neighbouring part to slip,
For so the law's laid down by Baron Tripp.
In such pure postures our first parents moved,
While hand in hand thro' Eden's bowers they rov'd,
Ere Beelzebub with meaning foul and false
Turned their poor heads, and taught them how to dance."

The Baron Tripp referred to in the above lines was a Dutchman who came to England during the war, obtained a commission in the Prince of Wales's regiment, the Tenth Light Dragoons, and was accepted by society as an honorary instructor of the new dance, which, perhaps, was not the more popular because it was foreign in origin. However, this, the first round dance, was objected to by most on account of the "squeezing, hugging, etc.," involved in its execution.

"What! the girl of my heart by another embrac'd?
What! the balm of her lips shall another man taste?
What! touched in the twirl by another man's knee?
What! panting recline on another than me?"

Every student of English literature remembers the astonishment of "Horace Hornem" when he saw the waltz danced for the first time, and observed "poor Mrs. Hornem with her arms half round the loins of a huge hussar-looking gentleman, and his, to say truth, rather more than half round her waist, turning round, and round, to a d——d see-saw, up-and-down sort of tune, that reminded him of the 'Black Joke,' only more '*affettuoso*,' till it made him quite giddy wondering whether they were not so." Byron, who, on this occasion, used the pseudonym of Hornem, in the

"apostrophic hymn" to the waltz, indicated in the prose introduction the popular feelings on the subject, and in the poem does not speak of it respectfully.

"Imperial Waltz! imported from the Rhine
(Famed for the growth of pedigrees and wine),
Long be thine import from all duty free,
And Hock itself be less esteemed than thee;
In some few qualities alike—for Hock
Improves our cellar—thou our living stock.
The head to Hock belongs—thy subtler art
Intoxicates alone the heedless heart:
Through the full veins thy gentler poison swims,
And wakes to wantonness the willing limbs."

But even as Mr. Hornem followed his wife's example, and, after having "broken his shins, and four times overturned Mrs. Hornem's maid, practising the preliminary steps in a morning," came to like the waltz best of all things, so Byron realised that the dance had come to stay.

"Endearing Waltz! to thy more melting tune
Bow Irish Jig, and ancient Rigadoon.
Scotch reels, avaunt! and Country-dance forgo
Your future claims to each fantastic toe." [1]

Indeed, this prophecy came to pass, for, in spite of all opposition and prejudice, the waltz

[1] *The Waltz: An Apostrophic Hymn.*

made headway; and when, during the visit of the Allied Sovereigns to England, the Emperor Alexander danced it at Almack's, those who still entertained any prejudice towards it lay low and held their peace.

CHAPTER XII

A BATTLE ROYAL (1815)

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A BATTLE ROYAL (1815)

FASHIONABLE society in England was one day in or about the beginning of 1811 shaken to its foundations by the report that Brummell and the Prince Regent had quarrelled, and in those circles the event caused as much excitement as the news of a battle in which the British army was engaged. For days nothing else was talked about, and every one had some theory, reasonable or preposterous, as to the cause of the rupture between these high and puissant powers. Indeed, even to-day the reason for the breaking off of the intimacy between the two great dandies cannot, with any degree of certainty, be stated. We have it on the authority of Brummell himself that the rumour, current at the time, that the Beau at a dinner party at Carlton House issued the command, "Wales, ring the bell!" had no foundation in fact, so far as he was concerned;

and was as false as that other version of the same story that one evening when he and Lord Moira were with the Prince, the latter asked Brummell to ring the bell, that Brummell, without thinking, said, "Your Royal Highness is close to it," that thereupon the host in a passion did ring the bell and ordered his guest's carriage, and was only appeased by Lord Moira's intervention. "I was on such intimate terms with the Prince," Brummell declared, "that if we had been alone I could have asked him to ring the bell without offence; but with a third person in the room I should never have done so, I knew the Regent too well."[1] It is true, however, that the order, "Wales, ring the bell!" was given at a royal supper-party by a lad, a young relative of the Prince's friend, Admiral John Willett Payne, who had had too much to drink; and that his Royal Highness did as he was told, but when the servants came, laughing good-humouredly, told them to "put that drunken boy to bed."

It is possible that jealousy had some share in bringing about the rupture, and that the Prince, like another famous personage, could bear no rival near the throne; but the actual cause seems to have been some remarks of Brummell about Mrs.

[1] Jesse: *Life of Brummell.*

Fitzherbert, during one of those periods when that lady was high in the royal favour. Even this is not very clear, for while one authority has stated that the quarrel arose because the Beau spoke sarcastically of Mrs. Fitzherbert, another declares it was because he praised her when his Royal Highness was bestowing his smiles in another quarter; while Brummell himself, who did not seem to know much more about it than anybody else, thought the trouble might have been occasioned by remarks he let drop concerning both the lady and the Prince. There was a burly porter at Carlton House called Big Ben, and it is said that Brummell used this nickname to designate the Prince, whose easily offended dignity was outraged by any allusion to his stoutness, and that Brummell made bad worse by calling Mrs. Fitzherbert Benina. Another story told was, that at a ball at Lady Jersey's the Prince asked Brummell to summon Mrs. Fitzherbert's carriage, and that the Beau, in transmitting the order to a servant, told him to call *Mistress* Fitzherbert's carriage. It is difficult to believe that Brummell, for all his insolence, could have committed such an unpardonable offence against good taste and decency; but it is known that Mrs. Fitzherbert, not the most

forgiving of women, had a grievance against him, and that at a *fête* given at Claremont by Charles Ellis,[1] the Prince begged him to leave so as not to disturb Mrs. Fitzherbert with his presence. If he refused, his Royal Highness said, the *fête* would cease: Brummell, without replying, made a low bow, re-entered his carriage, and returned to London.

According to General Sir Arthur Upton, the first estrangement did not long endure, and a temporary reconciliation occurred when Brummell in one night at the whist-table at White's won an enormous sum—stated by different authorities to be ten thousand and twenty thousand pounds—from George Harley Drummond, a partner in the great banking house of that name, from which, owing to this episode, he was compelled to retire. The Duke of York told his brother of this great *coup*, and the Beau was again invited to Carlton House. "At the beginning of the dinner matters went off smoothly, but Brummell in his joy at finding himself with his old friend, became excited and drank too much wine. His Royal Highness—who wanted to avenge himself for an insult he had received at Lady Cholmondeley's ball, when the Beau, looking towards the Prince, said

[1] Afterwards Lord Seaford.

to Lady Worcester, 'Who is your fat friend?'—had invited him to dinner merely out of a desire for revenge. The Prince, therefore, pretended to be affronted with Brummell's hilarity, and said to his brother, the Duke of York, who was present, 'I think we had better order Mr. Brummell's carriage before he gets drunk;' whereupon he rang the bell, and Brummell left the royal presence."[1]

It is, however, difficult to believe this account, and as Sir Arthur Upton declared he was present at the dinner, we are forced to the conclusion that his memory must have betrayed him. Certainly it was quite in keeping with the character of "The First Gentleman of Europe" to invite a guest with the deliberate purpose of insulting him before the company, but the reason that prompted him to revenge himself on Brummell cannot have been that assigned to him by Sir Arthur, for it was not to Lady Worcester that the Beau addressed the famous question, nor was it uttered, as Raikes has it, to "Jack" Lee after the latter had been speaking to the Prince in St. James's Street.[2]

[1] Gronow: *Reminiscences.*

[2] Raikes: *Portion of a Journal.* This version of the story is also given by the Whartons in *The Wits and Beaux of Society*, and it is accompanied in that book by an illustration by James Godwin showing the Beau in the act of uttering the historic phrase.

While everything else concerning the quarrel between Brummell and the Prince of Wales is indefinite, we are happy in having the truth about this immortal phrase—"a phrase," says Mr. Charles Whibley in his delightful volume on "The Pageantry of Life," "for which it was worth while to live and die." At Watier's Lord Alvanley, Sir Henry Mildmay, Henry Pierrepoint, and Brummell had in 1813 a great run of luck at hazard, and they decided to celebrate their good fortune by giving in July a Dandies' Ball at the Argyll Rooms. The question arose whether the Prince should be invited, and it is stated, on the authority of Pierrepoint, that Brummell's influence was great enough to cause the proposal to be vetoed. It was thought by all that, even if he was asked, as he was not on friendly terms with Brummell, he would have declined the invitation; and probably this would have happened; but when he heard of the Beau's attitude, he exercised the royal privilege of announcing his intention to be present. Many believed his Royal Highness sought this opportunity of accepting Brummell's hospitality in order to hold out the olive-branch, though the latter, who knew his erstwhile friend well, is not likely to have been deceived. On the eventful evening, as soon as

they were made aware of the arrival of the Prince, the four hosts assembled at the door to receive him, and when his Royal Highness entered, leaning on Lord Moira's arm, he shook hands with Alvanley, Mildmay, and Pierrepoint, but looking Brummell full in the face, passed on without giving any sign of recognition. Then it was that the Beau, while the Prince was still within hearing, turned to his neighbour, and asked with apparent nonchalance, "*Alvanley, who's your fat friend?*"

[As showing how history is made, here may be given, in addition to the previous accounts, two further versions of the incident. The late Lord Houghton stated that the "cut" occurred at the *fête* given in 1815 by the three most fashionable clubs to the Allied Sovereigns, when the Prince Regent shook hands with all the members of the reception committee save Brummell. Westmacott, in "The English Spy," wrote in 1825: "When the celebrated dandy ball was given to His Majesty (then Prince of Wales), on that occasion the Prince seemed disposed to cut Brummell, who, in revenge, coolly observed to A——y, when he was gone, 'Big Ben was vulgar, as usual.' This was reported at Carlton House, and led to the disgrace of the *exquisite*. Shortly

after he met the Prince and A——y in public, arm in arm, when the former, desirous of avoiding him, quitted the Baron: Brummell, who observed his motive, said loud enough to be heard by the Prince, 'Who is that *fat* friend of yours?' This expression sealed his doom; he was never afterwards permitted the honour of meeting the parties at the palace."]

The Prince said afterwards that if Brummell had accepted the "cut" good-humouredly, he would have renewed his intimacy with him;[1] but the Beau was the last person in the world to accept such an insult from a guest, even though that guest was the heir-apparent to the throne of England, and after this there was war to the death. Brummell was a good fighter, and he lost no opportunity to wound his powerful foe. He met him soon after in the waiting-room at the Opera. "The Prince of Wales, who always came out rather before the performance concluded, was waiting for his carriage," an eye-witness of this *rencontre* has related. "Presently Brummell came out, talking eagerly to some friends, and, not seeing the Prince or his party, he took up a position near the checktaker's bar. As the crowd flowed out, Brummell was gradually pressed backwards,

[1] Bourke: *History of White's.*

until he was all but driven against the Regent, who distinctly saw him, but of course would not move. In order to stop him, therefore, and prevent actual collision, one of the Prince's suite tapped him on the back, when Brummell immediately turned sharply round, and saw there was not much more than a foot between his nose and the Prince of Wales's. I watched him with intense curiosity, and observed that his countenance did not change in the slightest degree, nor did his head move; they looked straight into each other's eyes, the Prince evidently amazed and annoyed. Brummell, however, did not quail, or show the least embarrassment. He receded quite quietly, and backed slowly step by step till the crowd closed between them, never once taking his eyes off those of the Prince."

Far more angry was his Royal Highness when, one day, as his carriage drew up in Pall Mall, and the sentries were saluting, Brummell walked past, and, keeping his back to the carriage, as if unconscious of the royal presence, took the salute to himself. All is fair in love and war; and if this was trivial, at least it had the advantage of securing the desired result, for George, Prince Regent, was so furious at this occurrence, that he could not hide his anger from the bystanders—

which must greatly have added to the Beau's delight.

The result of this quarrel was curious. Probably the cause underlying it was that the Prince had tired of Brummell, as he tired of every man and woman with whom at one time or another he was intimate. He had abandoned Mrs. Fitzherbert, and had thrown over Lady Jersey, he had wearied of Sheridan and Fox, of Hanger and Lade; and now he had thought at one stroke to get rid of a friend and a rival. He certainly lost his friend, but, to his never-ending surprise, he found he had strengthened the position of his rival: he had quarrelled with, probably, the only man in English society who could, aye, and would, fight him with his own weapons!

Indeed, the quarrel with the heir-apparent was the greatest possible tribute to the Beau, for, in a day when the outward respect paid to royalty was far greater than it is now, Brummell's position was so strong that society regarded the campaign as a fight between equals. But even with this the Beau was not satisfied, and he carried the war into the enemy's country, with a skill and courage that left him supreme. He affected to regard the defection from his standard of England's future king as that of a mutinous pupil!

"I made him what he is, and I can unmake him," he said, nonchalantly to McMahon, well aware that his words would reach the exalted personage for whose ears they were intended. The Regent was furious, and his anger was not allayed when Moore introduced the subject into his "Intercepted Letters," where his Royal Highness is made to write to the Duke of York:

"Neither have I resentments, nor wish there should come ill
To mortal, except, now I think on't, Beau Brummell;
Who threatened last year, in a superfine passion,
To cut me, and bring the old King into fashion."

CHAPTER XIII

OATLANDS

From an etching by Richard Dighton (1817).

A VIEW FROM THE HORSE GUARDS.

(H.R.H. the Duke of York.)

CHAPTER XIII

OATLANDS

THE Duke and Duchess of York were Brummell's very good friends. The Duke, indeed, was distinguished among royal princes for never having abandoned a friend, even under the most trying circumstances. With the Beau he had no quarrel; and he was certainly not fond enough of his elder brother at this time, whatever he might have been ten years earlier, to take up the cudgels on behalf of that august personage. So, when Carlton House was closed to Brummell, the latter was still assured of a welcome at Oatlands, the country seat of the Royal Commander-in-chief and his wife, who had a great regard for him, and vied with each other in paying attention to him.

Brummell, in return, was attached to both, but he had an especially tender place in his heart for the Duchess, with whom he kept up an intermittent correspondence. Some of the letters that

passed between them have been preserved; and, to show the intimacy of their relations, one of the epistles may be given, which was written after Brummell had sent a dog as a birthday present to her Royal Highness:

"*On ne saurait être plus sensible que je le suis au souvenir obligeant que vous avez bien voulu me donner au jour de ma fête, et au charmant cadeau que le Duc m'a remis de votre part. Recevez mes remercîmens les plus sincères pour ce joli petit chien, c'est l'emblême de la Fidélité; j'aime à me flatter qu'elle sera celui de la continuation de notre amitié, à laquelle je vous assure que j'attache le plus grand prix.*

"*J'ai une toux de cimetière qui menace ruine; si elle ne m'a pas mis sous terre avant le commencement du mois prochain, je compte me rendre à Londres, dans ce temps-là, et un des motifs qui me fait envisager avec le plus de plaisir ce séjour qu'il me procurera l'avantage de vous y rencontrer et de pouvoir vous réitérer moi-même combien je suis*

"*Votre tous affectionnée amie et servante,*

"*F.*"

The Duke and Duchess befriended Brummell to the end, and would hear no word against him. When Berkeley Craven at York House spoke of the dishonesty of Brummell and Lord Alvanley, who were both abroad at the time on account of pecuniary difficulties, the Duke peremptorily closed the subject with, "I tell you what, Berkeley, all this may be true or not, but I

cannot bear to hear them abused by their oldest friends!" Brummell was grateful for this support, and, as will presently appear, did his best to repay it in kind.

The Duke was of a gay disposition, and Burns was well-advised to give his Royal Highness a much-needed warning:

> "For you, right rev'rend Osnaburg,
> Nane sets the lawn-sleeve sweeter,
> Altho' a ribbon at your lug
> Wad been a dress completer:
> As ye disown yon paughty dog
> That bears the keys o' Peter,
> Then, swith! an' get a wife to hug,
> Or, trouth! ye'll stain the mitre
> Some luckless day." [1]

The Duke married in 1791 Frederica, the eldest daughter of the King of Prussia, but it cannot be said that he mended his ways: he still gamed, and drank, and had intrigues with women. His wife, however, acting on the maxim of *noblesse oblige*, made no complaint of his conduct, and, while separating from him, did not decline to reside under the same roof. Indeed, when in

[1] *A Dream.* The Duke of York was born on August 16, 1763, and was appointed by his father Bishop of Osnaburg in the following January. He resigned the office in 1803.

1809 the Commander-in-chief was held up to ignominy through the sale of commissions by his mistress, Mary Anne Clarke, her Royal Highness stood by him, and appeared in public with him, in the generous effort to shield him from disgrace.

"Whatever clouds (if indeed they ever existed) obscured the earlier period of her marriage, were, in later times, completely dispersed," Raikes noted; "and nothing could equal the respect and attention with which she was treated by the Duke on all occasions. I have heard him express the highest opinion of her good sense, and I believe he rarely failed to consult her opinion on most questions of importance to himself."[1] Certainly the Duchess exercised upon him, on the whole, a beneficial influence, so far as his male friends were concerned. When she came to England he was surrounded by a set of *roués*, who exulted openly in their excesses, and gloried in their lack of respect for women; the worst of these being, in her Royal Highness's opinion, Charles Wyndham and Colonel Hervey Aston, for both of whom she entertained the strongest aversion.

Hervey Aston, in spite of these defects in his character, had the redeeming features of wit and courage. When Aston was going out to India

[1] *Portion of a Journal*, vol. i. p. 146.

in 1796 with his regiment, Captain Lindsay, who was in charge of the troop-ship, perhaps anxious not to have drunkenness on board, had been careful to take very little wine, and soon after the voyage began announced to the officers, "Gentlemen, I propose we should limit the consumption of wine to a pint, as I shall not have sufficient otherwise to last out the voyage." He was probably not delighted when Hervey Aston reassured him: "Pray don't make yourself uneasy on that head, as I happen to have about two thousand pounds' worth in the fleet, and, should you run short, I shall be happy to supply you!" [1]

The Colonel was courageous, even to excess. Though not a quarrelsome man, he was frequently involved in duels, usually the outcome of practical joking, to which form of amusement he was unduly prone. Indeed, in India during December 1798 he fought two duels on two successive days, and fell mortally wounded in the second encounter.[2] Fear was a feeling un-

[1] George Elers: *Memoirs.*

[2] Duel, December 23, 1798. "At Madras, in consequence of a wound he received in a duel with Major Allen, of which he languished about a week. Col. Hervey Aston had been engaged in a similar affair of honour, and on the same account, with Major Picton, only the day preceding that on which he met Major Allen, but which was

known to him. At the Mount Coffee-house, near Grosvenor Square, he saw a notorious Irish duellist, who had been out six times and killed his man at each meeting, and he made a vow that he would make the man stand barefooted before him. His friends implored him not to be foolhardy, and pointed out that the man's attention was already attracted. "No matter," said Aston; "I declare again that he shall stand barefooted before you, if you will make up among you a purse of fifty guineas." This was done, and then the Colonel remarked in a loud voice: "I have been in Ireland and am well acquainted with the natives. The Irish, being born in bogs, are every one of them web-footed. I know it for a fact." The duellist sprang up with a roar: "Sir, it is false." Aston, smiling, shook his head; whereupon the other, crying, "I, sir, was born in Ireland, and I will prove to you that it is a falsehood," hurriedly pulled off his shoes and stockings. In the end Aston shared the purse with the Irishman, and the affair ended peaceably.[1]

Though friendly with the Duke of York and the Prince of Wales, Aston disliked "Royal Tarry

fortunately terminated by each party firing in the air, and a proper explanation taking place as to the offence."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. lxix., pt. i. p. 527.

[1] Rogers: *Table Talk*, 1887, pp. 32–3.

From an etching by Gillray.

H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF YORK.

Breeks,"[1] and never hesitated to show it. One day the Duke of Clarence met him in St. James's Street, and in his usually hearty, sailor-like fashion, hailed him:

"Well, Aston, which way are you going?"

"First tell *me* which way are *you* going?" said the Colonel.

"Oh, I am going down St. James's Street."

"Are you?" said Aston. "*In that case, I* am going *up*. Good-morning to you!"

Gradually the set of which the Duchess disapproved died out, and was succeeded by a more refined and well-bred company. It was then that her Royal Highness held a little court and did her best to make Oatlands an agreeable place, though, it is stated by Charles Greville, who was devoted to his host and hostess, that it was the worst-managed establishment in England: "there are a

[1] A nickname bestowed upon the Duke of Clarence by Robert Burns, in allusion to his connection with the Navy.

"Young, royal Tarry Breeks, I learn,
Ye've lately come athwart her;
A glorious galley, stem an' stern,
Weel rigged for Venus' barter;
But first hang out, that she'll discern
Your hymeneal charter,
Then heave aboard your grapple airn,
An' large upon her quarter
Come full that day."

Burns: *A Dream.*

great many servants, and nobody waits on you; a vast number of horses, and none to ride or drive." Yet the discomforts seem to have kept no one away, and at the week-end parties there came regularly, besides "The Gruncher," who managed the Duke's racing stable, Lord Alvanley, Brummell, "Kangaroo" Cooke, Lord Foley, Erskine, Lord Yarmouth, Lord Worcester, and Lord de Ros. Tom Sheridan came there, too, with his charming wife, "very pretty, very sensible, amiable, and gentle; indeed, so gentle that Tom insists upon it that her extreme quietness and tranquillity is a defect in her character," one of the royal circle wrote to Monk Lewis. "Above all, he accuses her of such an extreme appre hension of giving trouble (he says), it amounts to absolute affectation. He affirms that, when the cook has forgotten her duty, and no dinner is prepared, Mrs. Sheridan says, 'Oh! pray don't get dinner on purpose for me; I'll take a dish of tea instead:' and he declares himself certain that, if she were to set her clothes on fire, she would step to the bell very quietly, and say to the servant, with great gentleness and composure, 'Pray, William, is there any water in the house?'—'No, madam; but I can soon get some.'—'Oh! dear, no; it does not signify; I

dare say the fire will go out of itself.'" The only complaint that any of the guests made was that there was too much whist, for the Duke would play all night, if some one at the table did not nearly fall asleep.

The Duchess was generally beloved, and Raikes, a constant visitor, noted with pleasure, the unceasing respect with which she was invariably treated even by the rowdiest spirits.[1] She was wise enough to keep herself apart from the troubles of the other branches of the royal family; and, love being denied her, devoted herself to acts of kindness and charity. She had a passion for flowers and animals, especially dogs, of which she kept a hundred or more at Oatlands, where she had a cemetery for her favourites, to whom she erected monuments. Her sympathies, however, were not limited to dogs. When, one day, "Monk" Lewis's cat settled itself on her skirt, and went to sleep, the host proposed to remove it.

[1] "The fair Princess sat first, far the highest in place,
But her rank in eclipse by good nature and grace—
Her manners no court upon earth could bestow,
To the best of all hearts their perfection they owe;
And her converse, so pleasant, so keen, so refined,
No reading could give—its bright source is its mind;
Her elegant form gives a life to the whole;
Coalition complete of the body and soul."

Erskine in Brummell's Album.

"No, no! you shall not disturb her now. Poor little ting! I do tink she love me; and do not take from me any ting dat love me."

Some one remarked that her Royal Highness was partial to all animals.

"Ah! *mein Gott!* yes, matam, dey are so dependent on us for kindness and protection; and when dey make dere appeal in dere innocent language, I tink we ought to love dem, if only for awaken de better part of our nature. Besides, dey are grateful for kindness, dey are sincere, dey are honest."

Matthew here interposed that if the cat saw the custard he could not be answerable for Minnette's honesty.

The Duchess laughed. "Poor ting! poor little ting," she said, as she stroked the cat, "dat is but dere nature. De dog, de cat, dey will snap and dey will bite; but how could I punish de poor ignorant ting, dat 'as no liberty of choice? I 'av many dog, as you know, but though I vos delight in de attachment and de faith of my dog, I could not say the dog is *virtuous*—still, I welcome de sweet spirit of *affection*—dat it is vin my regard. Ah! Master Lewise, me know dat de poor animal follow but dere nature; and would Gott dat man so truly follow his; for *his* nature is *divine*!"

The Duchess of York was in the habit of inviting to Oatlands men of letters and men of wit, by whom she liked to be surrounded—"more, I think," said Charles Greville, with abominable frankness, "from the vanity of having them round her than from any pleasure she takes in their conversation." Alvanley was her favourite, it is said; and among her *protégés* was "Monk" Lewis,[1] that vain, garrulous, fussy, pompous little man, who, in spite of himself, as it were, won many hearts. The Duchess was always pleased to see him at Oatlands; and one day, when she was leaving the room, she whispered something that brought tears to his eyes. Asked what was the matter, "Oh," he sobbed, "the Duchess spoke so *very* kindly to me!" "My dear fellow," Colonel Armstrong said soothingly, "pray don't cry; I daresay she didn't mean it!"

Lewis was not a *beau*, yet he mixed with the dandy circle; and somehow, perhaps it is because of his tender heart, reluctance is experienced to leave him out in the cold in a book in which so many of his friends are included. Sheridan may be excluded, because he was so much more than a *beau*, and Byron, too, for the same reason; but somehow there is a strong temptation to

[1] Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775–1818).

hold out a hand, as it were, to the almost forgotten writer whom every one loved.

Educated at Westminster and Christ Church College, Oxford, at an early age his mother, who had literary aspirations, turned his thoughts to the pursuit of letters, and before he was seventeen he had "commenced author" with a farce, "The East Indian," that was in due course accepted and played by Mrs. Jordon. Just after he had written this piece he went to Weimar, where he made the acquaintance of Goethe; and, after a sojourn there of more than a year, during which he imbued himself with German romanticism, he returned to England, only again to leave the country to take up his duties as *attaché* to the British Embassy at The Hague. In 1795, when he was twenty, he published the work—written in ten weeks—by which his name is best remembered, "The Monk," a fine medley of horrors, as those who have not read the book may deduce from Byron's allusion to it:

"Oh! wonder-working Lewis! monk or bard,
Who fain would make Parnassus a churchyard!
Lo! wreaths of yew, not laurel, bind thy brow,
Thy muse a sprite, Apollo's sexton thou!
Whether on ancient tombs thou tak'st thy stand,
By gibb'ring spectres hailed, thy kindred band;

Or tracest chaste descriptions on thy page,
To please the females of our modest age;
All hail, M. P.![1] from whose infernal brain
Thin-sheeted phantoms glide, a grisly train;
At whose command 'grim women' throng in crowds,
And kings of fire, of water, and of clouds,
With 'small gray men,' 'wild yagers,' and what not,
To crown with honour thee and Walter Scott!
Again all hail! if tales like thine may please,
St. Luke alone can varnish the disease;
Even Satan's self with thee might dread to dwell,
And in thy skull discern a deeper hell."[2]

"The Monk" aroused a storm of adverse criticism on account of its immorality, and thereby secured a great circulation. A reviewer, speaking of the wiles employed to allure the monk, remarked humorously: "Indeed, the whole temptation is so artfully contrived, that a man, it would seem, were he made as other men are, would deserve to be damned who could resist such devilish spells, conducted with such address, and assuming such heavenly forms;"[3] but a society for the suppression of vice—a corporation being as devoid of humour as of conscience—instructed the Attorney-General to move for an injunction; but, strangely enough, when a rule *nisi* was

[1] Lewis was member of Parliament for Hindon, 1796–1802.

[2] *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.*

[3] *Analytical Review*, 1796, vol. xxiv. p. 403.

obtained, although the author did not enter an objection, the matter was allowed to drop.

The attention attracted by his book unlocked the doors of society, and Lewis soon met almost every one of note: Scott, Byron, Tom Moore, Shelley, Earl Grey, Lord Melbourne, Lord Holland, and the rest. He visited the great country houses, and at the Duke of Argyll's seat, Inverary Castle, fell in love with his host's youngest daughter, Lady Charlotte Campbell,[1] to whom he addressed impassioned verses:

"From those we love compelled to part,
And haply ne'er again to see,
What anguish rends the feeling heart!
That anguish now is felt by me.

"Yet let not these fond, foolish tears
My int'rest in your mind decrease;
Nor murmur when my ill-timed fears
Disturb your happy bosom's peace.

"These tears from fond affection flow,
Parting from you my mind employs;
And while it dwells on future woe,
My soul is dead to present joys."

. . . . . .

[1] Lady Charlotte Campbell (1775–1861), married (1) in 1796 Colonel John Campbell (died 1809), (2) in 1818, Rev. Edward John Bury (died 1832); Lady-in-Waiting to Caroline, Princess of Wales, and the authoress of many novels and the notorious *Diary Illustrative of the Times of George IV.*, in which she betrayed her royal mistress's confidence.

From a photo by Emery Walker, after the picture by H. W. Pickersgill, R.A., in the National Portrait Gallery.

MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS.

Reading the story of Lewis's life, we are compelled to realise the fact that he was not unduly disturbed by his affection for Lady Charlotte, and that he was quite happy so long as he was permitted to write feeble verses indicative of his namby-pamby passion to the object of his adoration. There was, however, a rift in the lute of this otherwise fortunate young man: the incompatibility of temperament that prevented his parents from living together—a state of affairs that became yet more unpleasant when his father, Deputy-Secretary at War, entered into a *liaison* with another lady. Mat behaved very well to his father, whose only grievance against his son was that the latter would devote a great part of his allowance to his mother, for whom ample provision had already been made; but the lad's heart was with his mother, who, to judge from her letters, was a jealous, extravagant, somewhat quarrelsome woman.

A wealthy man on the death of his father, Lewis paid two visits, in 1815 and 1817, to his West Indian estates, and he interested himself in promoting the welfare of the slaves. He died at sea in 1818, on his way home.[1]

[1] As the result of observations made on his first visit, he wrote a *Journal of a West Indian Proprietor*, which is of considerable value to the historian. His other works include several plays and many translations from the German of Goethe, Schiller, and lesser-known authors.

The Duchess of York undoubtedly had a sincere regard for Lewis, inspired partly, perhaps, by his devotion to her, and partly by his gift for conversation and for turning out impromptu verses. Thus, when she was lamenting her vain efforts to reclaim a ne'er-do-weel, he sat down and wrote:

"The wretch to guilt and misery flies,
And royal Frederica sighs,
O'er gracious plans defeated;
Yet deem not, Princess, for yourself,
Tho' lost by that unworthy elf,
Your object not completed:
For long ere this, to heavenly climes,
Your *wish* to save his soul from crimes,
Has made its blest ascension;
And in the book that angels read,
The page that should have held your deed
Is filled with your *intention*!"

When at Oatlands Erskine was inveighing against marriage—a diatribe probably induced by his own unfortunate matrimonial life—and concluded by saying that a wife was a tin canister tied to a man's tail, Lewis promptly responded with:

"Lord Erskine at marriage presuming to rail,
Says, a wife's a tin canister tied to one's tail,

And the fair Lady Anne,[1] while the subject he carries on,
Feels hurt at his Lordship's degrading comparison.
But wherefore degrading ? If taken aright
A tin canister's useful, and polished, and bright,
And if dirt its original purity hide,
'Tis the fault of the puppy to whom it is tied." [2]

This was not very gracious of the novelist, for Erskine, who had a sincere admiration for the little man, had written of him in a very complimentary strain in Brummell's Album.

" ' Other poets,' cried Lewis, who sat next beside,
' Who shoulder us thus, may all evils betide ! '
But Lewis all earthly approach may defy ;
As a canonized monk he may mount to the sky ;
No, no, we can't spare his original brain,
Which has led us so often in Fancy's fair train ;
The scenes that surround us so dully the same,
Who shifts with his genius well merits his fame."

Lewis was on good terms with the Princess of Wales,[3] and the very first time he met the Duke of Clarence, his Royal Highness, Lewis tells us, half-pleased, half-amused, called him "Lewis,"

[1] Lady Anne Culling Smith, Lady-in-Waiting to the Duchess of York.

[2] This is frequently, but erroneously, attributed to Sheridan.

[3] "Here has another great lady taken it into her head to shower down civilities upon me. On Friday, the Princess of Wales (who, *sans rime ou raison*, has not spoken to me for these five years) chose to send for me into her box at the Argyll Rooms, made me sup with her, asked me to dinner yesterday, and kept me till three o'clock in

tout court, and told him that "he meant to ask the Spanish Deputies to dinner, and that as I was a man of romance and sentiment, he should invite me to meet them at Bushey Park"—which invitation, in spite of the writer's doubts, in due course arrived. But Lewis made a much more distinguished conquest, of no less a person than Byron, who liked him in spite of himself. "Lewis called. It is a good and good-humoured man, but pestilently prolix and paradoxical and *personal*. If he would but talk half, and reduce his visits to an hour, he would add to his popularity. As an author he is very good, and his vanity is *ouverte*, like Erskine's, and yet not offending." So Byron wrote of him one day, yet he was always pleased to see him. Lewis visited him and Shelley at Geneva before setting out a second time to the West Indies, and when the news of his death came, Byron whimsically expressed his regret. "A good man, a clever man, but a bore," he wrote. "My only revenge or consolation used to be setting him by the ears with some vivacious person who hated bores—

the morning, and was extremely good-humoured and attentive. To-day I dine at York House, and then sup with the Princess of Wales at the Admiralty: so that, for these two days, I shall have a dose of royalty."—*Life and Correspondence of Matthew Gregory Lewis*, April 24 (1804 ?).

especially Madame de Staël or Hobhouse, for example. But I liked Lewis, he was the jewel of a man, had he been better set; I don't mean personally, but less tiresome, for he was tedious as well as contradictory, to every thing and every body. Poor fellow! he died a martyr to his new riches—of a second visit to Jamaica.

> "'I'd give the lands of Deloraine,
> Dark Musgrave were alive again.'

"That is,

> "I would give many a sugar-cane
> Mat Lewis were alive again!"

CHAPTER XIV

BRUMMELL'S WATERLOO (1816)

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BRUMMELL might well have retained his position as *arbiter elegantiarum* for many years to come, if he had not succumbed to the delights of gambling. Jesse, it is true, avers that his star was fading. "A cloud had for some time been gathering over his fame as well as his fortune," he wrote[1]; "the *prestige* of his name was going, and his fiat no longer regarded; public events had eclipsed him, and the ladies of the *beau monde* were far more interested in hero-worship, or in procuring a hair from the tail of Platoff's horse, than securing the good opinion of the once all-powerful dictator. Brummell and Buonaparte, who had hitherto divided the attention of the world, fell almost together; the former being doomed to the mortification of seeing his share bestowed on the sea-

[1] *Life of Brummell.*

fight in the Serpentine, and the Chinese pagoda, and Oldenburg hats, and his cleanliness forgotten in that of the fierce sons of the Don." The incursion of foreigners after the Peace of 1814 —the time to which this passage refers—was, however, but a passing event, and could have had no lasting effect upon Brummell's reputation. The man who could survive a quarrel with the Prince of Wales might easily overcome the effects of the introduction of the Cossack trousers. Brummell fell—it may not even be said he fell, because he was at the height of his fame when he left England—Brummell *abdicated* owing to the pecuniary straits in which he became involved by a long run of bad luck at the hazard-table.

Like the rest of his set he had betted, and some of his wagers have been recorded in the famous Betting-book of White's Club:

Mr. Charles Bouverie bets Mr. Brummell one hundred guineas that the Empress Maria Louisa is not in Paris within six months of the present date.—April 9, 1815. [Bouverie paid.]

Mr. Brummell bets Mr. [Paul] Methuen twenty-five guineas that the Allies make peace with Buonaparte. [Methuen paid in 1814.]

Mr. Raikes bets Mr. Brummell fifty guineas that the three per cent. consols are not at 80, in one year of the

signing of the peace with France (not preliminaries).—January 1814.

Mr. [W.] Brodrick bets Mr. Brummell twenty guineas to two hundred that Buonaparte is not alive this day six weeks.—January 10, 1814. [Brodrick paid.]

Mr. Brummell bets Mr. [J. A. W.] Udney hundred guineas to twenty that Buonaparte returns to Paris.—December 16, 1812.—There were two other wagers made by Brummell on the same subject: one hundred guineas to twenty with Mr. W. H. Irby, and two hundred guineas to twenty with Mr. Paul Methuen.

Mr. Brummell bets Mr. [B. P.] Blackford thirty guineas to twenty-five guineas that Sir William Guise beats Mr. Dalton for the county of Gloucester, now contesting between them.—February 2, 1811. [Blackford paid.][1]

The sums involved in these and other wagers were well within Brummell's means, and it was a matter of little importance to him whether he won or lost these comparatively small amounts; but the case was very different when he was bitten with the mania for gaming, for men did

[1] White's Betting-book also includes several wagers of which Brummell was the subject.

Mr. Goddard bets Mr. Irby and Mr. W. Howard five guineas each that Mr. G. Brummell was matriculated at the university of Oxford and Mr. H. five guineas more.—1812. [Irby and Howard paid.]

Mr. Raikes bets Mr. Greville twenty-five guineas that Mr. Brummell is married before Mr. Mosseux.—May 17, 1815.

Lord Yarmouth [in 1819] gives Lord Glengall five guineas to receive one hundred guineas, if Mr. G. Brummell returns to London before Buonaparte returns to Paris.

not then play at the clubs for small stakes. At this time short whist had come into fashion, having after a fierce struggle deposed the original method of scoring;[1] and so long as the Beau contented himself with this game of skill he came to no harm. But even as Fox, who declared he could win four thousand a year at the whist table, abandoned that sober game for the giddy whirl of a more exciting sport, so after a time—one authority gives 1813 as the date—Brummell plunged headlong into the fierce joys of hazard.

The first time he indulged in this recreation, he lost heavily, and when he rose from the table was very depressed, partly because of his bad fortune, and partly, no doubt, owing to the re-

[1] Short whist was invented about 1775, but it did not come into fashion until the Regency. According to Major A. (in *The Laws of Short Whist*. Edited by J. L. Baldwin; with a treatise on the Game by J[ames] C[lay]. 1866), it arose in the following way:

"This revolution was occasioned by a worthy Welsh baronet preferring his lobster for supper hot. Four first-rate whist players . . . adjourned from the House of Commons to Brooks's, and proposed a rubber while the cook was busy. 'The lobster must be hot,' said the baronet. 'A rubber may last an hour,' said another, 'and the lobster be cold again, or spoiled, before we have finished.' 'It is too long,' said a third. 'Let us cut it shorter,' said a fourth.—Carried *nem. con.* Down they sat, and found it very lively to win or lose so much quicker. Besides furnishing conversation at supper, the thing was new—they were legislators, and had a fine opportunity to exercise their calling."

action from the excitement. However, as, early in the morning, he was walking home from White's with Tom Raikes, he saw a crooked sixpence on the pavement of Hill Street, Berkeley Square. His face lit up with joy, and, as he stooped to pick up the talisman, he said with great cheerfulness to his companion, "This is a harbinger of good luck!" So, indeed, for a while it proved, and during the next two years he won no less than thirty-six thousand pounds at the clubs and eight thousand more at Newmarket.[1]

A run of good luck at the gaming-table, however, is in the long run as disastrous to a persistent player as a run of bad luck, for, encouraged by his success, the gambler, confident of victory, increases his stakes until at last he is playing for sums far above his means: then the wheel of fortune changes, and the player is ruined in a very short time. Brummell, whose patrimony was thirty thousand pounds, actually won twenty-six thousand pounds in one evening! And it is an axiom of the gaming-table, only too often overlooked by its votaries, that he who wins twenty-six thousand pounds may as easily lose a like sum!

Mr. G. S. Street, in an interesting book on

[1] Chambre: *Recollections of West-End Life.*

"The Ghosts of Piccadilly," has recently suggested that Brummell was probably mad before he left England, and he arrives at this conclusion by contrasting his sane conduct at first with his subsequent recklessness; but the theory, though at first sight plausible, falls to the ground when it is clear that the Beau was acting under the influence of a passion for gaming; indeed, it is only to be upheld if it may be contended—though there are contentions more foolish, it must be admitted—that all gamblers are madmen!

In due course, as was only to be expected, fortune deserted Brummell, and one night—the fifth of a most relentless run of ill-luck—he exclaimed that he had lost every shilling he had in the world, and wished some one would bind him never to play again. "I will," said his friend Pemberton Mills, giving Brummell a ten-pound note, to receive a thousand pounds if the Beau played at White's during the next month. For a while Brummell stayed away from the club, but in about a fortnight Mills saw him again in the card-room. Mills did not claim the forfeit, but, touching the gambler on the shoulder, said reproachfully, "Well, Brummell, you may as well give me back the ten pounds you had the other night!"

Brummell traced his ill-fortune to the loss of his lucky sixpence, which, he thought, he must have given away by mistake to a cabman. In vain he advertised and offered a reward for the talisman: hosts of people brought him sixpenny-pieces with a hole, but none of these was the one which had been lost by the Beau, who, not allowing his misfortune to extinguish his humour, supposed characteristically that "that rascal Rothschild, or some of his set, had got hold of it."

It has been stated that in 1814 Brummell lost all his winnings, and ten thousand pounds besides; but, be this as it may, there is no doubt he was soon completely beggared; though, possessed of the true gambler's faith in the return of good luck, he raised money at ruinous interest on the security of his intimates to such an amount that one might well have asked of him as Horace Walpole did of Fox, "What will he do when he has ruined all his friends?"

At last things became so desperate that Brummell decided to fly the country by stealth. What was actually the last straw that confirmed his decision in this matter has never transpired, though several statements on the subject have been made. "Brummell was obliged by that

affair of poor M——, who thereby acquired the name of Dick the Dandy-killer (it was about money, and debt, and all that), to retire to France," Byron wrote; and Major Chambre confirms this by remarking that some unpleasant circumstances, connected with the division of one of the loans, occasioned the Beau's expatriation, and that a personal altercation took place between Brummell and M——, when that gentleman accused him of taking the lion's share of the money raised on their joint security.[1]

There is no doubt that at this time Brummell was very deeply involved with the usurers, some of whom were persons recognised, or at least tolerated, by a certain section of society that could not afford to quarrel with them. There was Howard, of Howard & Gibbs, who was educated at a charity-school at Oxford, was apprenticed to a hair-dresser, saved a portion of his wages and took a shop, saved a little more money, came to London, and did odd jobs in a beer-house, where he attracted the attention of a lawyer's clerk, who gave him an eagerly embraced opportunity to increase his earnings by copying legal documents. The lawyer himself heard of the lad and took him into his office, where his diligence and ambition be-

[1] *Recollections of West-End Life.*

came known to a wealthy client, who started him on his own account. He was successful in all his ventures, became a money-lender and a banker, accumulated wealth, entertained the Duke of York and the Marquis of Wellesley at his house—and one morning received a letter from his partner, who, unknown to him, had been indulging in various speculations, to say he was a ruined man![1]

Another notorious character was "Jew" King, as he was called, who had a house in Clarges Street and a villa on the bank of the Thames, at both of which places he entertained lavishly. Gronow states that King had good taste in art, but it is difficult to believe this of a man who drove about in a yellow carriage, with panels emblazoned by a well-executed shield and armorial bearings, and drawn by two richly caparisoned steeds, the Jehu on the box wearing, according to the fashion of those days, a coat of many capes, powdered wig, and gloves *à l'Henri Quatre*, and two spruce footmen in striking but not gaudy livery, with long canes in their hands.[2]

On the other hand, "Jew" Solomon, *alias* Goldschid, Slowman, etc., made no pretensions

[1] *Recollections of West-End Life.* [2] Gronow: *Reminiscences.*

to good taste of any kind, and was the typical avaricious, hard-hearted money-lender of convention. He must have had a sense of humour, however, for when a lady in society persuaded him to accept a thousand pounds from her and pay her fifteen per cent., he took the money and lent it to the lady's son at the profitable rate of eighty per cent. It was this usurer who, perhaps, had more to do with Brummell's flight than any one else, for when it was said to Alvanley that if the Beau had remained in London something might have been done by his friends to put him on his feet again, the witty peer replied with a *bon mot*, "He has done quite right to be off; it was Solomon's judgment!"

Brummell had some time before given up the house in Chesterfield Street, and taken lodgings at No. 13, Chapel Street, Park Lane, where his landlord was one Hart, the Duke of Gloucester's steward; and he had dismissed his *chef*, contenting himself with regaling his friends with dinner sent in by Watier, from the club at the corner of Bolton Street and Piccadilly; by these economies largely reducing his household expenses. Raikes, who thought the Beau had not lost a third of his winnings, was, therefore, much astonished when his friend confided to him that

his situation was so desperate that he must fly the country that night and by stealth. On that evening Brummell made an effort to raise a further sum of money, and this well-known interchange of letters took place :

"My dear Scrope,

"Lend me two hundred pounds ; the banks are shut, and all my money is in the three per cents. It shall be repaid to-morrow morning.

"Yours,

"George Brummell."

"My dear George,

"'Tis very unfortunate ; but all my money is in the three per cents.

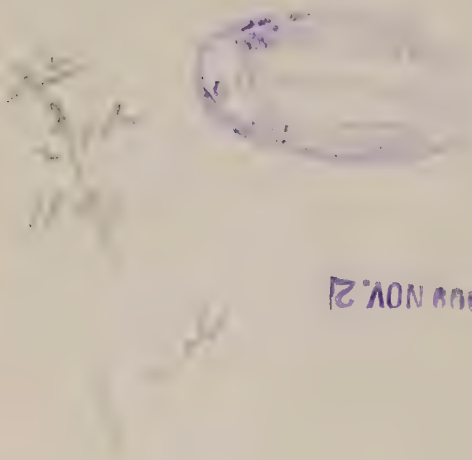
"Yours,

"S. Davies."

In spite of this disappointment, Brummell dined quietly at his apartments—on a cold fowl and a bottle of claret, Jesse assures us ; and later, dressed with even more than his usual care, showed himself at the Opera. He left the theatre early, entered a chaise, and, without returning to Chapel Street, drove away from London until he met his carriage, to which for the nonce four horses were attached. He reached Dover on the next morning, and at once hired a small vessel, which deposited him in a few hours at Calais.

Soon all England knew of his flight. "Mr. Brummell has absconded, and left all his friends to pay the money they were security for," the Marchioness of Lansdowne wrote to Lady Harriet Frampton on May 20; and two days later his effects were sold by auction for the benefit of his creditors, and realised about eleven hundred pounds, competition among his friends for *souvenirs* of the great man being very severe.[1] The title-page of the book of sale has been preserved, and is reprinted as a curiosity on the opposite page.

[1] Among his effects was a handsome snuff-box, in which was a note in the Beau's handwriting. "This was intended for the Prince Regent, if he had conducted himself with more propriety towards me."



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